

The 32nd Annual

Boston University
Conference on
Language Development

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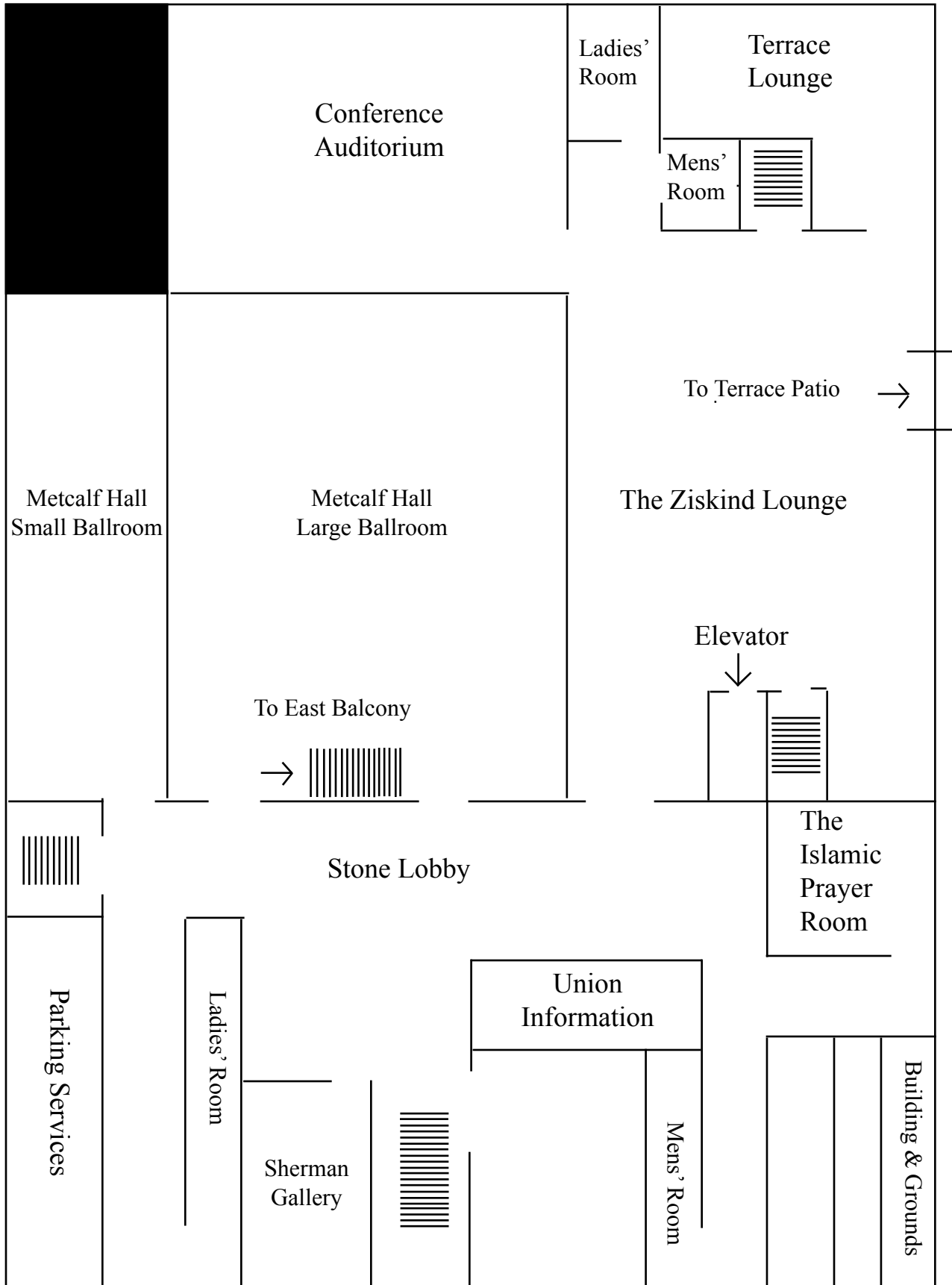
Boston University
Conference on
Language Development



November 2-4, 2007

Map of George Sherman Union (Second Floor)

Commonwealth Avenue



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To First Floor and
Main Entrance

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Welcome

Our 32nd Year

We would like to welcome all of you to the Thirty Second Annual Boston University Conference on Language Development. This conference was started 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 thirty-two years.

Invited Speakers

At this year's conference, we are honored to have Ellen Bialystok and William O'Grady as our featured speakers. Professor Bialystok will present Friday's keynote address, titled "Cognitive effects of bilingualism across the lifespan." Saturday's program will close with Professor O'Grady's plenary address, "Does emergentism have a chance?" We are pleased to once again host a symposium during Saturday's lunch period. This year's symposium will showcase the most current work on "The production and processing of grammatical morphemes," with speakers Katherine Demuth, Anne Fernald, Lee Osterhout, and Virginia Valian. We are also thrilled to host a "Festschrift tribute in honor of Melissa Bowerman" during Friday's lunch period, highlighting Professor Bowerman's outstanding contributions to the field of language development over the past more than 40 years.

Paper and Poster Presentations

The rest of the program is devoted to a wide range of papers and posters chosen from submitted abstracts. This year we received 466 submissions, each of which was sent out to five reviewers for anonymous review. Of these, 87 papers and 66 posters were selected for presentation, for an acceptance rate of 33%. 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 who generously agreed to serve as alternates in case of cancellations.

Proceedings

Once again this year we will be publishing the Proceedings of the Conference, which includes papers presented and those selected for alternate status. Information about ordering copies is available in your registration folders and at the Cascadilla Press table during the book exhibit. We will also have an online supplement to the proceedings for papers given as posters, which will be published on the web by BUCLD.

Enjoy

Here at Boston University, we are committed to providing an ongoing forum for work in the diverse field of language development. We hope you will enjoy the conference!

The 2007 Conference Committee

Harvey Chan
Heather Jacob
Enkeleida Kapia

Coordinators

Heather Caunt-Nulton
Jane Chandlee
Michelle Franchini
Eileen Gessner
Nehrir Khan
Maria LaMendola
Andrew Lord
Gudrun-Marion Rheiner

Boston University Conference on Language Development
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For general information about the conference, visit our website at:
<http://www.bu.edu/linguistics/APPLIED/BUCLD/>

Acknowledgements

The Boston University Conference on Language Development is organized each year by students from the Program in Applied Linguistics. Every year, we depend 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. In addition, this year's conference is supported in part by the National Science Foundation under Grant No. BCS-0584399 and by the National Institutes of Health under Grant No. R13 HD042130-06, for which we are also very grateful.

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 thankful to the faculty and staff of the Program in Applied Linguistics and the School of Education for their support and encouragement.

We extend special thanks to our faculty advisors, Shanley Allen and Cathy O'Connor, for the care and guidance that have helped to ensure a successful conference. Their expertise and support have been invaluable.

We would also like to acknowledge the important contributions to BUCLD of the many staff at Boston University. Our heartfelt thanks to: Tara McKee of Conference Services for coordinating all of the equipment, facilities, and refreshments for the conference; Deanna Ammon of Disability Services for providing sign-language interpreters; Marianne Taylor and Dan Goncalves of the School of Education for their support in managing the conference finances and supplies; Niall Kavanagh of the Office of Information Technology, and Carol Moy and Lisa Wong of the Office of the Comptroller, for collaborating on the creation of our new online registration system.

Once again we were fortunate to be able to use Pasha, the abstract review software developed by Ezra Van Everbroeck at the University of California at San Diego, in our online review process. We continue to be grateful for the generosity of our colleagues in the Linguistics Department at UCSD.

Finally, we would like to thank the 189 reviewers listed below who read and rated the abstract submissions we received this year. The high quality of the abstracts makes it especially difficult to assemble a program of just 87 papers and 66 posters. We are particularly grateful for their thoughtful attention to each submission.

Adam Albright	Stephen Crain	Carlo Geraci	Felicia Hurewitz
Shanley Allen	Suzanne Curtin	LouAnn Gerken	Nina Hyams
Jennifer Arnold	Ewa Dabrowska	Judith Gierut	David Ingram
Sergey Avrutin	Barbara Davis	Heather Goad	Tania Ionin
Jessica Barlow	Cecile de Cat	Adele Goldberg	Harriet Jisa
Lilia Bartolomé	Jan de Jong	Susan Goldin-Meadow	Elizabeth Johnson
Edith Bavin	Jill de Villiers	Helen Goodluck	Alan Juffs
Misha Becker	Helene Deacon	Peter Gordon	Dorit Kaufmann
Heike Behrens	Kamil Deen	Janet Grijzenhout	Nina Kazanina
Gerard Bol	Laurent Dekydtspotter	Andrea Gualmini	Evan Kidd
Melissa Bowerman	Holger Diessel	Maria Teresa Guasti	Wolfgang Klein
Holly Branigan	Daniel Dinnsen	Ayse Gürel	Melanie Kuhn
Ellen Broselow	Heiner Drenhaus	Paul Hagstrom	Marie Labelle
Doreen Bryant	Kenneth Drozd	Justin Halberda	Laura Lakusta
Nancy Budwig	Nigel Duffield	Cornelia Hamann	Donna Lardiere
Ann Bunger	Catharine Echols	Heidi Harley	Thomas Lee
Catherine Caldwell-Harris	Richard Ely	Roger Hawkins	Nonie Lesaux
Carlo Cecchetto	Paola Escudero	Arild Hestvik	Y. K. Ingrid Leung
Aoju Chen	Julia Evans	Makiko Hirakawa	Claartje Levelt
Youngon Choi	Anne Fernald	Kathy Hirsh-Pasek	Beth Levin
Harald Clahsen	Paula Fikkert	Barbara Höhle	Jeffrey Lidz
Molly Collins	Cynthia Fisher	Erika Hoff	Jacqueline Liederman
Peter Coopmans	Maria João Freitas	Robert Hoffmeister	Elena Lieven
Julie Coppola	Anna Gavarró	Bart Hollebrandse	Sarah Liszka

Acknowledgements

Conxita Lleó
Theo Marinis
Stefka Marinova-Todd
Lori Markson
Chloe Marshall
Rachel Mayberry
Jessica Maye
Corrine McCarthy
Richard Meier
Jürgen Meisel
Sarah Michaels
Maria Mody
Silvina Montrul
Gary Morgan
James Morgan
Alan Munn
Julien Musolino
Chandan Narayan
Rochelle Newman
Elissa Newport
Ira Noveck
Cathy O'Connor
Janna Oetting
William O'Grady

Barbara Pan
Anna Papafragou
Johanne Paradis
Joe Pater
Ana Pérez-Leroux
Alexandra Perovic
William Philip
Colin Phillips
Bernadette Plunkett
Linda Polka
Pilar Prieto
Rachel Pulverman
Clifton Pye
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Marnie Reed
Mabel Rice
Tom Roeper
Monica Rothweiler
Caroline Rowland
Esther Ruigendijk
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Teresa Satterfield
Jeannette Schaeffer

Christina Schmitt
Petra Schulz
Bonnie D. Schwartz
Nuria Sebastián-Gallés
Julie Sedivy
Amanda Seidl
Ann Senghas
Ludovica Serratrice
Rushen Shi
Yasuhiro Shirai
Leher Singh
Roumyana Slabakova
Jesse Snedeker
William Snyder
Hyun Joo Song
Antonella Sorace
Rex Sprouse
Jeffrey Steele
Daniel Swingley
Helen Tager-Flusberg
Anne-Michelle Tessier
Margaret Thomas
Michael Tomasello
Rosemarie Tracy

John Trueswell
Ianthe Maria Tsimpli
Sharon Unsworth
Sigal Uziel-Karl
Elena Valenzuela
Virginia Valian
Heather van der Lely
Angeliek van Hout
Spyridoula Varlokosta
Laura Wagner
Jürgen Weissenborn
Lydia White
Fei Xu
Charles Yang
Hanoko Yoshida
Martha Young-Scholten
Chen Yu
Tania Zamuner
Kie Zuraw
Andrea Zukowski
Barbara Zurer Pearson

General Information

• Registration and Session Locations

All sessions will be held in the George Sherman Union, 775 Commonwealth Avenue. Registration will take place in the 2nd floor lobby (see diagram on the back of the front cover). You may register on Thursday starting at 12:00 PM, on Friday starting at 8:00 AM, or Saturday and Sunday starting at 8:30 AM. Please register before attending any sessions. We rely greatly upon 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.

• Plenary Events

The **Keynote Address** will be delivered by Ellen Bialystok on Friday at 8:00 PM in Metcalf Large. Poster Session I (attended) with desserts will immediately follow in the Terrace Lounge.

The **Plenary Address** will be given by William O'Grady on Saturday at 5:45 PM in Metcalf Large. Poster Session II (attended) with hors d'oeuvres will immediately follow the address in the Terrace Lounge.

A **Lunchtime Symposium** on "The Production and Processing of Grammatical Morphemes" with presentations from Katherine Demuth, Anne Fernald, Lee Osterhout, and Virginia Valian will be held on Saturday at 12:15 PM in Metcalf Large.

• Poster Sessions

Poster Session I: 33 posters will be on display in the Terrace Lounge. There will be two attended Poster Sessions on Friday: one at 3:30 PM and one at 9:15 PM. Refreshments will be available at both sessions.

Poster Session II: 26 posters will be on display in the Terrace Lounge. There will be two attended Poster Sessions on Saturday: one at 3:45 PM and one at 7:00 PM. Refreshments will be available at both sessions.

• Special Sessions

The **Society for Language Development**, will hold its fourth annual symposium, "Generalization in Language Learning," on Thursday, November 1, between 1:00 PM and 5:00 PM in Metcalf Large, with a reception following immediately in Ziskind Lounge. Speakers include Janet Pierrehumbert, Josh Tenenbaum, and Steven Pinker.

A **Festschrift Tribute in Honor of Melissa Bowerman** will be held on Friday, November 2, at 12:45 PM in the Conference Auditorium.

A special session entitled "**What's Hot and How to Apply**" will be facilitated by Peggy McCardle (NIH) and Joan Maling (NSF) on Saturday at 8:00 AM in Metcalf Large.

NSF and NIH consultation hours will be held in the Ziskind Lounge. NIH hours will be held on Friday 9:00 – 12:00 AM and 2:00-5:00 PM and on Saturday 10:00-11:30 AM. NSF hours will be held on Friday 2:00 – 5:00 PM and on Saturday 10:00 – 11:30 AM and 2:00 – 5:00 PM.

A **BUCLD Business Meeting** will be held on Friday, 12:30- 12:45 PM in Metcalf Small.

• Additional Information

Parking is available in the lot at Granby St. for \$2 per half hour and at the Agganis Arena (925 Commonwealth Ave.) for \$1 per hour. Free on-street parking is also available on Sunday.

Temporary luggage storage space be made available next to the registration desk. The area will be staffed during conference sessions only. Although a student volunteer will be present in the registration area, participants leave their luggage at their own risk.

General Information

A **nursing room** will be available for nursing mothers in GSU 310-311.

Internet access be available at two computer stations in the Ziskind Lounge between the hours of 8:00 AM and 6:00 PM throughout the conference.

Publishers' exhibits will be held in the Ziskind Lounge on Friday from 9:00 AM to 5:30 PM, Saturday from 10:00 AM to 5:30 PM and Sunday from 9:00 AM to 1:00 PM. For a list of exhibitors, see page 71.

Refreshments will be served in Ziskind Lounge before the morning sessions and during breaks, and in both Ziskind Lounge and the Terrace Lounge during attended poster sessions. 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 ~ MBTA Maps

The 33rd Annual Boston University Conference on Language Development is tentatively scheduled to be held on October 31, and November 1-2, 2008, at Boston University.

NIH/NSF Consultation Hours

Peggy McCardle (NIH) and Joan Maling (NSF)

NIH - Friday - 9:00 – 12:00am & 2:00 – 5:00pm

Saturday - 10:00-11:30am

NSF - Friday - 2:00 – 5:00pm

Saturday - 10:00 – 11:30am & 2:00 – 5:00pm

Schedule at-a-glance

Friday, November 2

8:00 am	Registration Begins
9:00 am - 10:30 am	Talks
10:30 am - 11:00 am	Morning Break with refreshments
11:00 am - 12:30 pm	Talks
12:30 pm - 12:45 pm	BUCLD Business Meeting
12:45 pm - 2:00 pm	Festschrift tribute in honor of Melissa Bowerman
2:00 pm - 3:30 pm	Talks
3:30 pm - 4:15 pm	Poster Session I Attended with refreshments and Afternoon Break with refreshments
4:15pm - 5:45 pm	Talks
5:45 pm - 8:00 pm	Dinner Break
8:00 - 9:15 pm	Keynote Address
9:15- 10:00 pm	Poster Session I Attended with refreshments

Saturday, November 3

8:00 am	Registration Begins
8:00 am- 9:00 am	Funding Symposium
9:00 am - 10:30 am	Talks
10:30 am - 11:00 am	Morning Break with refreshments
11:00 am - 12:00 pm	Talks
12:15 pm -2:15 pm	Lunch Symposium
2:15 pm -3:45 pm	Talks
3:45 pm - 4:30 pm	Poster Session II Attended with refreshments and Afternoon Break with refreshments
4:30 pm -5:30 pm	Talks
5:45 - 7:00 pm	Plenary Address
7:00 - 7:45 pm	Poster Session II Attended with refreshments

Sunday, November 5

8:30 am	Registration Begins
9:00 am - 10:30 am	Talks
10:30 am - 11:00 am	Morning Break with refreshments
11:00 am - 1:00 pm	Talks

FRIDAY, NOVEMBER 2

Time	Session A (Metcalf Small)	Session B (East Balcony)	Session C (Conference Auditorium)
9:00	R. MUGITANI, T. KOBAYASHI, K. ISHIZUKA: Perceptual development of phonemic categories for Japanese single/geminate obstruents	A. GABRIELE, J. MAEKAWA, L. IGNATOWSKI, E. CHRISTENSEN: Distinguishing between the past and the present: Against a critical period for tense in L2 acquisition	S. -I. TAMURA, N. KATSURA, Y. KANEKO, M. KOIZUMI: Word-order preferences in Japanese children's ditransitives: The effect of verb meanings
9:30	K. PLUNKETT, N. MANI: Graded sensitivity to mispronunciations of vocalic features of early words	L. DOMINGUEZ, M. J. ARCHE: Optionality in L2 grammars: The acquisition of SV/VS contrast in Spanish	R. JONES, B. AMBRIDGE, J. PINE, C. ROWLAND: Testing a semantic account of children's retreat from argument-structure over-generalization errors
10:00	A. BERNARD, K. ONISHI, A. SEIDL: Allophones and phonemes in sound sequence learning	J. H. MA, J. KIM, B. D. SCHWARTZ: Rethinking Johnson & Newport (1991)	K. MESSENGER, H. BRANIGAN, J. MCLEAN, A. SORACE: English-speaking children's early passives: Evidence from syntactic priming
10:30	BREAK (Ziskind Lounge)		
11:00	S. PRUDEN, W. SHALLCROSS, K. HIRSH-PASEK: Foundations of verb learning: Comparison helps infants abstract event components	S. MONTRUL: Incomplete acquisition in adult heritage language speakers: The regression or the interface hypothesis?	M. SRINIVASAN, S. CAREY: The representation of spatial and temporal extent: Evidence for structural similarity in infancy
11:30	L. LAKUSTA, R. REARDON, L. OAKES, S. CAREY: A goal bias in prelinguistic thought and language: How strong is the homology?	T. KUPISCH: The impact of language dominance on cross-linguistic influence in unbalanced bilingual development	M. FEIST: The changing shape of prepositional meanings
12:00	P. LI, A. SHUSTERMAN, L. BOGSTED: Children's hypotheses about spatial frame-of-reference words	A. MUNTENDAM: Transfer in the C-domain: Word order, topic and focus in Andean Spanish	B. MALT, E. AMEEL, G. STORMS: Object naming and later lexical development: From baby bottle to beer bottle
12:30	BUCLD Business Meeting (Metcalf Small - finished by 12:45 sharp!)		
12:45	FESTSCHRIFT TRIBUTE IN HONOR OF MELISSA BOWERMAN (Conference Auditorium)		
2:00	C. YU, L. SMITH: Infants rapidly learn word-referent mappings via cross-situational statistics	H. FITZ, F. CHANG: The role of the input in a connectionist account of the accessibility hierarchy in development	H. S. SONG, B. D. SCHWARTZ: Korean wh-constructions with negative polarity items: L1 child, L2 child and L2 adult comparisons vis-a-vis development and convergence
2:30	Y. OSHIMA-TAKANE, J. SATIN, A. TINT: Rapid word-action mapping in French- and English-speaking children	H. WANG, T. MINTZ: A dynamic learning model for categorizing words using frames	A. BELIKOVA: Explicit instruction vs. linguistic competence in adult L2-acquisition: What they think you know and what you do know
3:00	C. CHAN, J. CHEN, R. PULVERMAN, T. TARDIF, X. MENG: Biases within or opportunities without? English- and Mandarin-learning 14- and 18-month-olds' learning of novel words for agents, actions, and objects	E. KIDD, J. LUM: Investigating the memory mechanisms underlying the acquisition of the English past tense	L. WHITE: Definiteness effects in the L2 English of Mandarin and Turkish speakers
3:30	POSTER SESSION I Attended (Terrace Lounge & Ziskind Lounge)		
4:15	A. ROMBERG, J. SAFFRAN: What comes next? Infants' predictions of linguistic input	R. ORFITELLI, N. HYAMS: An experimental study of children's comprehension of null subjects: Implications for grammatical/performance accounts	K. DAHLEN, C. CALDWELL-HARRIS: Hearing yourself think: Vocal and sub-vocal rehearsal in foreign language learning
4:45	J. MORGAN, M. SODERSTROM: 22-month-olds detect verb-noun exchanges in fluent speech: Evidence for category preferences for familiar content words	M. HUGHES, S. ALLEN: A developmental study of subject omission in child English: A discourse-pragmatic perspective	M. KAUSHANSKAVA, V. MARIAN: Age-of-acquisition effects in the development of a bilingual advantage for word learning
5:15	R. SHI, A. MOISAN: Acoustic cues to syntactically ambiguous words in infant-directed speech	A. KUNTAY, S. BHATIYAR, H. SUNGUR, O. OZDAMAR: Requestive speech leads to referential clarity in Turkish preschool children	L. RAYNOLDS, J. UHRY: The hierarchical acquisition of second language consonant sounds in bilingual kindergarten students
5:45	DINNER BREAK		
8:00	KEYNOTE ADDRESS: (Metcalf Large) "Cognitive effects of bilingualism across the lifespan" Ellen Bialystok, York University		
9:15	POSTER SESSION I Attended (Terrace Lounge & Ziskind Lounge)		

SATURDAY, NOVEMBER 3

8:00	NSF/NIH FUNDING SYMPOSIUM: What's Hot and How to Apply (Conference Auditorium)		
Time	Session A (Metcalf Small)	Session B (East Balcony)	Session C (Conference Auditorium)
9:00	M. FLAHERTY, A. SENGHAS: Numerosity and number signs in Deaf Nicaraguan adults	C. LUKVANENKO, A. CONROY: Evidence of Principle C in 30-month-olds	J. PARADIS, A. TREMBLAY, M. CRAGO: Bilingual children's acquisition of English inflection: The role of language dominance and task type
9:30	L. SINGH, S. NESTOR, J. PAULSON, K. STRAND: Predicting childhood vocabulary from infant word segmentation abilities	N. TIMYAM, K. DEEN: Invisible to Condition C: Apparent binding violations in child and adult Thai	J. NOMURA: Early sensitivity to information structure in Japanese
10:00	J. SCHUH, I. -M. EIGSTI, J. EVANS, S. POLLAK, J. MILLER: Is exposure enough? Narrative development in internationally adopted children	A. ZUKOWSKI, R. MCKEOWN, J. LARSEN: A tough test of the locality requirement on reflexives	J. PINE, B. AMBRIDGE, C. ROWLAND: The non-negative evidence problem and the retreat from (dative) overgeneralization errors: Children's and adults' sensitivity to verb frequency, verb semantics and morphological constraints
10:30	BREAK (Ziskind Lounge)		
11:00	L. DEKYDTSPOTTER, B. DIAKITE, K. BORA, H. -K. KIM, H. -J. KIM, J. -K. LEE, M. RAGHEB, H. -K. SEO, Y. -T. WANG: Intermediate traces and anaphora resolution in the processing of English as a second language	P. PIÑAR, D. GALVAN, S. MATHER: Gesture and the development of visio-spatial skills in ASL as a second language	C. BANNARD, D. MATTHEWS: Young children store familiar sequences of words in memory: Evidence from imitation studies
11:30	G. RODRIGUEZ: Access to the full-parse route in the processing of cataphoric pronouns in a second language	M. ZVAIGZNE, Y. OSHIMA-TAKANE, P. GROLEAU, K. NAKAMURA, F. GENESEE: The function of children's iconic co-speech gestures: A study with French-Japanese bilinguals and French monolinguals	B. ESTIGARRIBIA: Variation and facilitation in the acquisition of English yes/no questions
12:15	LUNCH SYMPOSIUM: (Metcalf Large) "The production and processing of grammatical morphemes" Katherine Demuth, Brown University Anne Fernald, Stanford University Lee Osterhout, University of Washington Virginia Valian, Hunter College and CUNY Graduate Center		
2:15	A. HESTVIK, B. TROPPER, V. SHAFER, R. SCHWARTZ: ERP- evidence for delayed gap-filling in SLI	M. THOTHATHIRI, J. SNEDEKER: Moving beyond the number and animacy of arguments: Children show on-line evidence for mapping semantic roles to syntactic positions	I. GRENON, L. WHITE: Acquiring rhythm: A comparison of L1 and L2 speakers of English and Japanese
2:45	J. B. TOMBLIN, J. BJORK, M. H. CHRISTIANSEN: Association of FOXP2 genetic markers with procedural learning and language	M. DITTMAR, E. LIEVEN, M. TOMASELLO: Young German children's early syntactic competence: A preferential looking study	L. FABIANO, B. GOLDSTEIN: Phonological acquisition in bilingual Spanish-English speaking children
3:15	K. STROMSWOLD: Prenatal glucocorticosteroids selectively impair language development	S. UNSWORTH, A. GUALMINI: Uncovering the pattern of children's interpretation of negation and indefinites	J. MAH, H. GOAD, K. STEINHAEUER: Francophones and English /h/: An acoustic problem? Evidence from event-related brain potentials
3:45	POSTER SESSION II Attended (Terrace Lounge)		
4:30	Y. T. HUANG, J. SNEDEKER: Cascading activation across levels of representation in children's lexical processing	A. CASTILLA, A. PEREZ-LEROUX, A. ERIKS-BROPHY: Syntax and the lexicon in early omission of Spanish clitics	L. PEARL: Putting the emphasis on unambiguous: The feasibility of data filtering for learning English metrical phonology
5:00	K. THORPE, A. FERNALD: Developing efficiency in on-line interpretation of adjective-noun phrases: A longitudinal study from 24- to 36-months	I. IVANOV: L1 acquisition of Bulgarian object clitics: Unique Checking Constraint or failure to mark referentiality?	A. ALBRIGHT, G. MAGRI, J. MICHAELS: Modeling lags of doubly marked structures with additive constraint interaction
5:45	PLENARY ADDRESS: (Metcalf Large) "Does emergentism have a chance?" William O'Grady, University of Hawai'i at Manoa		
7:00	POSTER SESSION II Attended (Terrace Lounge & Ziskind Lounge)		

Time	Session A (Metcalf Small)	Session B (East Balcony)	Session C (Conference Auditorium)
9:00	N. SAGARRA, J. HERSCHENSOHN: Processing gender in L2 Spanish	K. SYRETT: Adverbs provide infants with cues to differences between object properties and the semantics of gradable adjectives	E. DE BREE, P. VAN ALPHEN, P. FIKKERT, F. WIJNEN: Metrical stress in comprehension and production of Dutch children at-risk of dyslexia
9:30	L. K. KIM, U. LAKSHMANAN: The processing role of the article choice parameter: Evidence from L2 learners of English	N. MODYANOVA, K. WEXLER: Maximal trouble in free relatives	R. FRECHETTE, M. LABELLE: Influence of prosody on the production of determiners and adjectives in two years old children's sentences
10:00	W. Y. CHOW, E. WHITE, F. GENESEE, K. STEINHAEUER: Native-like processing in highly proficient late Chinese/English bilinguals: Evidence from event-related potentials	M. VARGAS-TOKUDA, J. GUTIERREZ-REXACH, J. GRINSTEAD: Children's comprehension of the Spanish existential determiners <i>unos</i> and <i>algunos</i>	R. BIJELJAC-BABIC, T. NAZZI: French-learning infants' sensitivity to lexical stress
10:30	BREAK (Ziskind Lounge)		
11:00	D. WEISS, C. GERFEN, A. MITCHEL: Colliding cues in word segmentation: The role of cue strength and individual differences	T. GORO, A. GAGLIARDI, A. OMAKI, N. KATSURA, S. -I. TAMURA, N. YUSA, C. PHILLIPS: Freedom of scope and conservatism in the development of Japanese	S. GXILISHE, C. DENTON-SPALDING, P. DE VILLIERS: The acquisition of noun-class marking in Xhosa: Early sensitivity to form and function
11:30	A. ENDRESS, J. MEHLER: Learning and hallucinating words from speech: Statistical learning and word segmentation	O. OZTURK, A. PAPAFRAGOU: The acquisition of evidentiality in Turkish	T. BEYER, C. HUDSON KAM: The comprehension of standard American English tense morphology by 6- and 7-year-old speakers of African American English
12:00	S. SAHNI, J. SAFFRAN, M. SEIDENBERG: Connecting cues in word segmentation	T. HEIZMANN: Exhaustivity in clefts and questions, and the quantifier connection	J. ZAPP: Knowing more than one can say: The early regular plural
12:30	A. VAN KAMPEN, G. PARMAKSIZ, B. HOEHL: Metrical and statistical cues for word segmentation: The use of vowel harmony and word stress as cues to word boundaries by 6- and 9-month-old Turkish learners	C. NAKAO, T. GORO: Scope ambiguity without covert scope-shifting in the acquisition of English	L. NAIGLES, L. WAGNER, A. MALTEMPO: Productive comprehension of English tense/aspect morphology at 29-months

ALTERNATES

A. TREMBLAY	Acquisition of English (primary) stress by French-Canadian L2ers: Non-target-like foot alignment
Y. IGARASHI, R. MAZUKA	Exaggerated prosody in infant-directed speech? Intonational phonological analysis of Japanese infant-directed speech
E. THOM, C. SANDHOFER	Vocabulary size and fast mapping of color words
K. KAKU, J. LICERAS, N. KAZANINA	Beginner and intermediate Japanese learners of English: Can they acquire the abstract feature 'Determiner Phrase Boundedness'?
C. QUAM, D. SWINGLEY	Phonological knowledge trumps salient local regularity in 2-year-olds' word learning
B. TROPPER, A. HESTVIK, V. SHAFER, R. SHWARTZ	ERP evidence for impaired processing of wh-questions in children with SLI

POSTER SESSION I

Friday, November 2
 Posters will be attended from 3:30 PM - 4:15 PM and from 9:15 PM - 10:00 PM (Terrace Lounge & Ziskind Lounge)

Authors	Title
N. L. SHIN, H. S. CAIRNS	Monolingual development of Spanish subject pronouns: Sensitivity to continuity of reference
L. CHEUNG	First language acquisition of elliptical structures in Cantonese
E. KALLESTINOVA	Early errors in sentence discourse structures: Evidence from the acquisition ofthetic sentences in Russian
Y. GERTNER	Not all transitive subjects are agents: Exploring 23-month-olds' understanding of transitive sentences
O. TARASENKOVA	Acquisition of gender in Russian
F. CHANG	Comparing different approaches for using n-grams in syntax acquisition
L. PALTIEL-GEDALYOVICH, A. HACHEN, R. EITAN, J. SCHAEFFER	The acquisition of Hebrew tense
A. PAPAFRAGOU	Spatial asymmetries in language and memory
H. WATERFALL, P. SHIMPI, J. HUTTENLOCHER	Acquiring multiple contextual and syntactic mappings: The emergence of spatial terms
J. Y. SONG, K. DEMUTH	How acoustic cues in infant-directed speech facilitate word recognition
Y. IGARASHI, R. MAZUKA	Exaggerated prosody in infant-directed speech? Intonational phonological analysis of Japanese infant-directed speech
J. LIDZ, A. CONROY	Mechanisms of LF priming: Data from Kannada and English
J. VIAU, J. LIDZ	Below the surface: Hierarchy and abstraction in children's dative verb phrases
R. FOOTE	Integration of linguistic knowledge in early and late English-Spanish bilinguals
C. JING	Children's interpretation of wide scope disjunction in negative context
K. BRIDGES, E. HOFF	The role of siblings in the English language development of bilingual toddlers in the U. S.
K. SKORUPPA, F. PONS, A. CHRISTOPHE, L. BOSCH, E. DUPOUX, N. SEBASTIAN-GALLES, R. A. LIMISSURI, S. PEPERKAMP	Language-specific stress perception by 9-month-old French and Spanish infants

POSTER SESSION I

Friday, November 2
 Posters will be attended from 3:30 PM - 4:15 PM and from 9:15 PM - 10:00 PM (Terrace Lounge)

Authors	Title
E. RUIGENDIJK, N. FRIEDMANN, C. HAMANN, C. KOLLING	The interpretation of pronouns and reflexives: Evidence from German kindergarten children
J. PARISH-MORRIS, M. COLLINS, K. HIRSH-PASEK	Talking books: What do children comprehend?
A. BOLONYAI, M. KOHN	'Oh my gosh!': Evaluation and voicing in narrative from a cross-linguistic perspective
M. ABO-ZENA	Assessing parental goals and strategies for nurturing Arabic-English bilingualism in pre-school children
C. QUAM, D. SWINGLEY	Phonological knowledge trumps salient local regularity in 2-year-olds' word learning
M. GOLDWATER, C. ECHOLS	Structural priming depends on semantic similarity in 4-year-olds but not 5-year-olds
A. MARTIN, A. VOULOUMANOS, K. ONISHI	Do 12-month-olds expect that speech can be used to communicate a goal?
R. SCHMALE, G. HOLLICH	Toddlers' word learning in accented speech
E. ZARETSKY, E. BAR-SHALOM	Is selective attrition possible in Russian-English bilinguals?
B. TROPPER, A. HESTVIK, V. SHAFER, R. SCHWARTZ	ERP evidence for impaired processing of wh-questions in children with SLI
S. SHAYAN, L. GERSHKOFF	Finding AGENTs and PATIENTs
P. KLECHA, J. JALBERT, A. MUNN, C. SCHMITT	Explaining why <i>gonna</i> precedes <i>will</i> in acquisition
J. ROTHMAN, M. IVERSON, J. CABRELLI, T. JUDY	What the start of L3 tells us about the end of L2: N-drop in L2 and L3 Portuguese
G. PIZER, K. SHAW, R. MEIER	Joint attention and child-directed signing in American Sign Language

POSTER SESSION II

<p style="text-align: center;">Saturday, November 3 Posters will be attended from 3:45 PM - 4:30 PM and from 7:00 PM - 7:45 PM (Terrace Lounge & Ziskind Lounge)</p>	
Authors	Title
S. YUAN, N. LI, H. CHEUNG, C. FISHER, S. -Y. CHEN, J. LIN, F. -M. TSAO	Mandarin-speaking 2-year-olds use simple syntactic cues in interpreting novel verbs
M. ERKELENS	Why Dutch 12-month-old infants do not use frequent frames in early categorization
S. BRANDT	Skewed input facilitates first steps into complement-clause production: A case study in German
A. KOVÁCS, J. MEHLER	Cross-modal integration of linguistic rules and responses schemas in monolingual and bilingual infants
A. HACOHEN	Acquiring the mass/count distinction in Hebrew: How does it compare with English?
E. THOM, C. SANDHOFER	Vocabulary size and fast mapping of color words
L. SONG, R. GOLINKOFF, S. BOSSE, W. MA	Telling adjectives from verbs: 3-year-olds use morphological cues to interpret novel words
K. KAKU, J. LICERAS, N. KAZANINA	Beginners & intermediate Japanese learners of English: Can they acquire the abstract feature 'Determiner Phrase Boundedness'?
A. Müller, P. Schulz, B. Höhle	Do children interpret only sentences? Evidence from German
M. KUMAGAMI	Acquisition of Japanese wh-questions: The effects of processing strategies on L2 sentence judgment
H. -Y. KWAK	The role contextual factors in scope interpretation by Korean-speaking children: The case of numeral quantifiers and negation
N. SMITH, S. EDWARDS, V. STOJANOVIC, S. VARLOKOSTA	Object clitics and definite articles in Greek pre-school children with Specific Language Impairment (SLI): Evidence for grammatical and processing accounts
B. HUANG, P. LI	Childrens' understanding of partially mapped number words
D. TANNER	Underspecification and default agreement in L2 German nominals
K. YATSUSHIRO	German determiner presuppositions in first language acquisition
S. KIMURA, M. MIYAO, K. DEEN	English passives acquired before Japanese passives in bilingual Japanese/English children
R. LEIBBRANDT, D. POWERS	Grammatical category induction using lexically-specific templates

POSTER SESSION II

Saturday, November 3
 Posters will be attended from 3:45 PM - 4:30 PM and from 7:00 PM - 7:45 PM (Terrace Lounge)

Authors	Title
S. KIM	Contextual effects on comprehension of the focus particle only
S. STYLES, K. PLUNKETT	What's in a prime: Separate contributions of words and pictures in a lexical priming task for infants
A. NADIG, S. OZONOFF	Bridging inferences in high functioning autism: A reading time study
A. WEISLEDER, K. THORPE, N. HURTADO	Interpreting attributive adjectives in English and Spanish: Effects of sequential processing on children's comprehension
C. LEW-WILLIAMS	Learning novel nouns in Spanish: Differences between L1- and L2-speakers in on-line processing of grammatical gender
M. MIYAO	Incrementality, predictability, and the use of traces in L2 Japanese processing
D. TOWNSEND, P. COLLINS	Immigrant English learners and academic vocabulary development: What works and what predicts growth?
C. FUJI, T. HASHIMOTO, K. MURASUGI	A theoretical account for the undergeneration and overgeneration in Japanese complex predicates
T. MAGNITSKAIA	A case of crosslinguistic influence at the syntax/pragmatics interface in Russian-English bilingual children

Session A--Metcalf Small

Perceptual development of phonemic categories for Japanese single/geminate obstruents

*Ryoko Mugitani, Tessei Kobayashi and Kentaro Ishizuka
NTT Communication Science Laboratories*

In Japanese, obstruents are phonemically contrasted by their closure lengths (e.g. /seki/ for *cough*, /se:ki/ for *stoneware*). This study investigated the perceptual development of phonemic categories for obstruents on the basis of closure length (CL) in Japanese speakers. The first two experiments, consisting of discrimination and identification tasks (Exp. 1 and 2), defined actual categories for the single/geminate obstruents in Japanese adults. In accordance with the adult-defined categories, Exp. 3 tested Japanese 5- and 12-month-old infants regarding their within- and between-category discrimination of single/geminate obstruents. The results showed that, analogous with adult native speakers, 12-month-old infants perceive obstruents along the native phonemic category. Experiment 4, which used a harmonic complex tone, revealed that 12-month-olds distinguished between-category stimuli based on phonemic information, rather than solely from the simple temporal difference between their CLs. Taken together, our findings indicate that obstruents are perceived, and presumably categorized phonemically, by 12-month-old Japanese infants.

Session B--East Balcony

Distinguishing between the past and the present:
Against a critical period for tense in L2 acquisition

*Alison Gabriele and Junko Maekawa, University of Kansas
Lindsay Ignatowski, University of Illinois,
Urbana-Champaign
Erik Christensen, University of Kansas*

The acquisition of the past tense by native speakers of languages like Mandarin, which does not mark tense, has been a subject of interest in L2 acquisition (Hawkins & Liszka 2003; Lardiere 1998, 2003) because it addresses the question of whether there is a critical period for features that are not instantiated in the learners' native language (Hawkins & Chan 1997). This study examines whether Mandarin native speakers rely on aspect when interpreting events in English or whether they are able to make distinctions based on tense. 32 native speakers of Mandarin learning English and 23 native speakers took an interpretation task targeting the simple past, present progressive, and past progressive. While the intermediate learners do not make distinctions based on tense, the advanced learners are clearly successful in distinguishing present and past tense. We argue that tense is fully acquirable even if the category is not instantiated in the L1.

Notes

Session C--Conference Auditorium

Word-order preferences in Japanese children's ditransitives:
The effect of verb meanings

*Shin-Ichi Tamura, Natsuko Katsura
Yoshiaki Kaneko and Masatoshi Koizumi
Tohoku University*

This paper reports our experimental findings on Japanese children's word order preferences in the production of Japanese ditransitive constructions. We investigated whether Kishimoto's (2001) classification of Japanese ditransitives (i.e. change-of-possession vs. change-of-location verbs) affects children's word order preferences for the Dative Object and the Accusative Object. In our elicited production task, 4-year-old Japanese children showed different word order preferences, depending on the existence of a meaning component: change of possession. With change-of-possession verbs, children produced the Dat-Acc order more often than the Acc-Dat one, while with change-of-location verbs, no significant difference between both orders was observed. Our results suggest that children's word order preferences depend not only on syntax but also on semantics. In addition, most children produced both word orders with both types of verbs, suggesting that word order permutation with scrambling is fully operative at around age 4.

Session A--Metcalf Small

Graded sensitivity to mispronunciations of vocalic features of early words

Kim Plunkett and Nivedita Mani
University of Oxford

Infants are sensitive to mispronunciations of the vowels and consonants of familiar words by as early as 15 months of age. The current study examines whether infants display a graded sensitivity to different degrees of mispronunciations of the vowels in familiar words. Infants were presented with correct pronunciations, 1-feature mispronunciations (height, backness or roundedness), 2-feature mispronunciations (height and backness, backness and roundedness, or roundedness and height) or 3-feature mispronunciations (vowels changed in all three features) of the word-medial vowels of familiar words. Infants looked longer at the target object following correct pronunciations and 1-feature mispronunciations, but not following 2- and 3-feature mispronunciations of the vowels of familiar words. The results suggest a developing sensitivity to degrees of mispronunciations of the vowels in familiar words, with the 24-month-olds displaying a more robust effect of graded sensitivity to mispronunciations of the vowels in familiar words, compared to the 18-month-olds.

Session B--East Balcony

Optionality in L2 grammars:
The acquisition of the SV/VS contrast in Spanish

Laura Dominguez and Maria J. Arche
University of Southampton

Optional constructions are often incorrectly allowed in L2 developing grammars and this is generally assumed to be the result of either learners failing to access syntactic features not represented in their L1, or of deficits in the syntax-pragmatics interface. In this study we examine the acquisition of word order in Spanish, arguing that certain errors found in advanced non-native grammars cannot be sufficiently accounted for as simple pragmatic-related deficiencies. Instead, we propose that the availability of optional forms is the result of an overgeneralisation of one of the options in the target language to contexts where neither syntactic nor pragmatic rules would allow them. Under this analysis, the availability of optional forms in the advanced group can be accounted for by a purely syntactic deficit, independent of learners' knowledge of pragmatic rules, signaling the existence of an intermediate stage where grammar restructuring, on the basis of apparently ambiguous input, is observed.

Session C--Conference Auditorium

Testing a semantic account of children's retreat from argument-structure over-generalization errors

Rebecca Jones, Ben Ambridge
Julian M. Pine and Caroline F. Rowland
University of Liverpool

Children learn not to use verbs in non-permitted constructions from repeated exposure to the verb in permitted constructions (Theakston 2004), and by forming semantic classes of (non-) alternating verbs (Pinker 1989). How does such a learning-mechanism operate? Perhaps children acquire from repeated exposure to a construction (e.g., transitive causative) a semantic representation of the construction (e.g., X causes Y to perform action using direct, unmediated contact). Repeated presentation of a verb (e.g., *laugh*) in non-causative situations entrenches for the child the non-causative semantics of the verb, rendering its usage in the transitive-causative construction increasingly ungrammatical. Thus (all other things being equal) causative overgeneralization errors denoting an event with a high degree of direct, unmediated causation (e.g., *The magician's spell disappeared Bart*) should be regarded as more acceptable than similar errors reflecting slightly less direct causation (e.g., *The magician disappeared Bart*). Ratings of such sentences by 9-year-olds supported this prediction.

Notes

Session A--Metcalf Small

Allophones and phonemes in sound sequence learning

*Amélie Bernard and Kristine H. Onishi, McGill University
Amanda Seidl, Purdue University*

How do we learn the acceptable sound sequences of our language (e.g., “sing” not “ngis”) and does phonemic status play a role?

In contrast to allophones, phonemes allow us to distinguish between meanings and are usually discriminated easily; yet allophones may be used systematically. Can adults learn novel phonotactic patterns dependent on vowel nasality when this contrast is phonemic and uses native (French) or non-native sounds (Bengali), or is allophonic (English)?

After brief exposure to an artificial language, adults for whom the contrast was (1) phonemic rated novel legal items as more familiar than novel illegal items, whether the sounds were native or not, (2) allophonic did not rate the legal and illegal items differently. Generalization to new vowels occurred only with phoneme-dependent patterns.

While the organization of the phonological system remains flexible in adulthood, phonological learning seems to be constrained by the phonemic status of the segments.

Session B--East Balcony

Rethinking Johnson & Newport (1991)

*Jee Hyun Ma, Junghee Kim and Bonnie D. Schwartz
University of Hawai'i*

Johnson & Newport (1991), in their ostensible L2-endstate study, found that oral acceptability judgments of adult, but not (early) child, Chinese-English L2ers fell (far) below native levels across 3 subadjacency-violation types: extraction from R(elative)C(lause)s, wh-islands, C(omplex)NPs. These findings suggest to J&N that “adult learners of a language will sometimes form hypotheses or rules ... unnatural to human languages” (p. 245).

Our study revisits (non-)adherence to subadjacency but from a non-endstate perspective, comparing Korean-English L2 adults, Korean-English L2 children and L1-English-acquiring children. Oral acceptability-judgment and elicited-production results reveal: All 3 groups are most targetlike on extraction from RCs and least targetlike on extraction from CNPs--paralleling, moreover, J&N’s Chinese-English adult ‘endstate’ L2ers. On the assumption that child (L1 and) L2 acquisition is UG-constrained, the finding that adult L2 development exhibits identical subadjacency-violation patterns as child (L1/L2) development argues, contra J&N, that adult L2 acquisition is indeed UG-constrained (Schwartz 1992, 2004).

Notes

Session C--Conference Auditorium

English-speaking children’s early passives:
Evidence from syntactic priming

*Katherine Messenger, Holly Branigan
Janet McLean and Antonella Sorace
University of Edinburgh*

This syntactic priming study investigated semantic and lexical factors in 3- and 4-year-olds’ passives: early use of the English passive is argued to be semantically constrained to action verbs (Maratsos et al 1985) and young children apparently perform better with *get-* than *be-*passives (Harris & Flora 1982). Experiment 1 found a reliable priming effect of Structure (active – passive) on passive responses, but no effect of Verb-Type (actional – non-actional) suggesting that by 4, children do have an abstract passive representation that does not appear to be constrained by verb semantics. Experiment 2 confirmed a reliable priming effect from *get-* as well as *be-*passives. Priming from *be-* to *get-*passives suggests this effect did not arise solely from lexical priming of the auxiliary but that 4-year-olds have a common representation underlying both passives, though the absence of priming in the opposite direction suggests the passive may be acquired with *get* earlier than with *be*.

Session A--Metcalf Small

Foundations of verb learning:
Comparison helps infants abstract event components

*Shannon M. Pruden, University of Chicago
Wendy L. Shallcross and Kathy Hirsh-Pasek,
Temple University*

To learn any language infants must extract elements of events that relational words (e.g., verbs, prepositions) label. Pruden and colleagues (2004) found that infants younger than 10 months are unable to abstract an invariant path and infants younger than 13 months are unable to abstract an invariant manner from dynamic events. In these studies infants were shown only a single event during each familiarization trial (“sequential presentation”). According to structural-alignment theory (Gentner 1983), circumstances that allow for simultaneous comparison between events may help infants detect the similarities and differences in those events. The present studies investigated the role comparison plays in helping English-learning infants abstract an invariant path (Study 1) and manner (Study 2). 7- to 9-month-old infants were presented with two events simultaneously (“simultaneous presentation”) during each familiarization trial. Our findings suggest that processes, like comparison, influence category formation, and that infants can conceptualize components lexicalized in language.

Session B--East Balcony

Incomplete acquisition in adult heritage language speakers:
The regression or the interface hypothesis?

*Silvina Montrul
University of Illinois, Urbana-Champaign*

This study investigates whether the Regression Hypothesis or the Interface Hypothesis can best explain the patterns of incomplete acquisition and selectivity observed in Spanish heritage speakers. 69 adult Spanish heritage speakers (who acquired English before age 5) and 22 native speakers participated in 3 experiments. Experiment 1 tested knowledge of the preterit/imperfect contrast with different predicates. Experiment 2 tested the indicative/subjunctive contrast. Following Montrul & Slabakova’s (2003) methodology, both experiments used elicited production to command of morphology and sentence conjunction judgment tasks to tap semantic interpretation. Experiment 3 focused on DOM and used oral production and a grammaticality judgment task. Results of the 3 experiments showed significant differences between the native speakers and the heritage speakers, attesting that heritage speakers have incomplete knowledge of Spanish. Since, overall, tense/aspect was retained better than subjunctive and DOM, this result lends support to the Interface Hypothesis.

Session C--Conference Auditorium

The representation of spatial and temporal extent:
Evidence for structural similarity in infancy

*Mahesh Srinivasan and Susan Carey
Harvard University*

How do we represent and reason about abstract concepts such as time? Linguists have long noted that when we describe our temporal experience, we co-opt the language of space (as in *The movie was long*). This has raised a provocative proposal: perhaps we use the same language for space and time because of structural similarities they share. We evaluate this proposal, focusing on whether structural similarity exists between representations of temporal duration and spatial extent. Experiment 1 asks whether adults are better able to associate spatial entities (lines) with temporal entities (tones) when these are positively correlated in ‘length’. Experiment 2 asks whether the structural similarity is itself motivated by shared language by testing pre-linguistic 9-month-old infants. Results suggest that structurally similar representations exist prior to language acquisition and are continuous into adulthood. These studies help to advance the debate over the representation of abstract concepts.

Notes

Session A--Metcalf Small

A goal bias in prelinguistic thought and language:
How strong is the homology?

*Laura Lakusta, Rachel Reardon
Leona Oakes and Susan Carey
Harvard University*

In language, the categories “goal” and “source” are abstract, extending to motion of animate and inanimate objects and to a variety of event types. Across languages and event types, goal paths are privileged over source paths in the linguistic encoding of events. Three studies tested the hypothesis that the linguistic salience of goal paths derives from non-linguistic features of event representation. 12-month-old infants encoded end points in preference to starting points when viewing motion events involving a toy duck and a self-moving balloon that had a face. Infants did not privilege end points in their encoding of motion events involving an inanimate balloon. Thus, unlike in linguistic event coding, an end point bias in pre-linguistic thought may be strongly modulated by the intentional structure of the event. These results raise the question of how children later learn to collapse over conceptual domains for purposes of coding paths in language.

Session B--East Balcony

The impact of language dominance on cross-linguistic
influence in unbalanced bilingual development

*Tanja Kupisch
McGill University*

According to Müller & Hulk (2001), grammatical structures are vulnerable to cross-linguistic influence in bilingual acquisition if they involve the syntax-pragmatics interface and instantiate partial overlap at surface structure. Cross-linguistic influence is claimed to be independent of language dominance. The present study tests these assumptions by examining article acquisition in unbalanced German-English bilinguals. The grammatical domain involves the syntax-pragmatics interface, but the two languages show complete rather than partial overlap. Under the conditions formulated above, influence should not occur. The analysis shows that children begin to use articles earlier in their stronger language than in their weaker one. However, in their weaker language, they supply determiners more in obligatory contexts than MLU-matched monolinguals. Hence, knowledge of articles in the stronger language seems to accelerate the development of articles in the weaker language. The study concludes that language dominance is a factor determining cross-linguistic influence, if children show a strong imbalance.

Notes

Session C--Conference Auditorium

The changing shape of prepositional meanings

*Michelle Feist
University of Louisiana, Lafayette*

Research into the meanings of spatial prepositions suggests that they are semantically complex (e.g., Coventry & Garrod 2004), with adult speakers attending to a variety of attributes of scenes when describing spatial relations. Do children evidence the same complexity of meaning in their preposition use as do adults? If not, how do their meanings differ from those of adults? To begin to answer these questions, preschool-aged and adolescent children were asked to choose *in* or *on* to describe pictures that varied with respect to geometry, animacy of the Figure and Ground, and functional information about the Ground (cf., Feist 2000; Feist & Gentner 2003). The results show that children, like adults, do attend to a variety of factors when using spatial prepositions. However, the patterns of influence differed markedly from those found with adults, suggesting that the meanings of spatial prepositions change over the course of acquisition.

Session A--Metcalf Small

Children's hypotheses about spatial frame-of-references terms

*Peggy Li and Anna Shusterman, Harvard University
Leah Bogsted, Massachusetts Institute of Technology*

Languages make use of different coordinate systems (north-south, left-right) to reference spatial relationships. How do children learn the meanings of such words? Two experiments examined 52-66 month-old English-speaking children's interpretation of novel spatial words (*ziv* and *kern*) when introduced on objects to a doll's left and right, and asked how easily the novel words could be learned when provided feedback consistent with particular meanings. Most children interpreted *ziv* and *kern* as geocentric terms (akin to north-south) and could not learn the words as meaning the doll's left-right. A third experiment assessed children's nonlinguistic ability to represent the doll's left-right. Children had to retrieve a coin hidden in one of two bags attached to the doll's wrists after they and/or the doll moved. Children's ability to retrieve the coin was mediated by the type of movement. These data have implications for how children learn meanings for "left" and "right."

Session B--East Balcony

Transfer in the C-domain:
Word order, topic and focus in Andean Spanish

*Antje Muntendam
University of Illinois, Urbana-Champaign*

Research on bilingual acquisition shows that the syntax-pragmatics interface (C-domain) is permeable to crosslinguistic influence. I argue that crosslinguistic influence in the C-domain persists in adult Quechua-Spanish bilinguals: Andean Spanish (AS) and Standard Spanish (SS) are syntactically identical, but there is pragmatic transfer from Quechua into AS. While SS is SVO, in AS the verb frequently appears after the object. Previous studies attribute this to an influence of Quechua, which is SOV, but do not discuss what is transferred. The alternative orders are possible in SS, but in SS fronted elements encode topic/focus. The main syntactic properties of focus fronting in SS are weak-crossover and long distance-movement. I designed experiments to test for these properties in AS and Quechua. The results show that what is transferred is pragmatic uses, not syntactic structures. The study has implications for the debate on vulnerability of the C-domain in SLA, Agrammatic Aphasia, and SLI.

Session C--Conference Auditorium

Object naming and later lexical development:
From baby bottle to beer bottle

*Barbara C. Malt, Lehigh University
Eef Aemeel and Gert Storms, University of Leuven*

Some word classes are known to require an extended learning period, but names for concrete objects have been considered less problematic. However, there is surprising variability across languages in the sets of objects picked out by many nouns, indicating that the category boundaries are at best loosely constrained by similarity. We found substantial evolution from age 5 to 14 in the use of nouns for 73 familiar household containers, with only a minimal increase in total vocabulary. Instead, over-extended words narrowed over time and under-extended words broadened. The children gradually learned which features are relevant in assigning names to objects and came to attach the right weights to them. However, even the naming pattern of adults could not be fully explained by the weighted features. A second component of the development may be mastery of language-specific idiosyncrasies obtained through experience with the naming of individual objects.

Notes

Session A--Metcalf Small

Infants rapidly learn word-referent mappings via cross-situational statistics

*Chen Yu and Linda Smith
Indiana University*

First word learning should be difficult because any pairing of a word and scene presents the learner with an infinite number of possible referents. Accordingly, theorists of children's rapid word learning have sought constraints on word-referent mappings. These constraints are thought to work by enabling learners to resolve the ambiguity inherent in any labeled scene to determine the speaker's intended referent at that moment. The present study shows that 12- and 14-month-old infants can resolve the uncertainty problem in another way, not by unambiguously deciding the referent in a single word-scene pairing, but by rapidly evaluating the statistical evidence across many individually ambiguous words and scenes. In a 4-minute training consisting of 30 trials, with six different word forms and six different objects, infants can learn word-referent pairs despite the fact that on no single trial are the mappings of words to referents unambiguously presented.

Session B--East Balcony

The role of the input in a Connectionist account of the accessibility hierarchy in development

*Hartmut Fitz, University of Amsterdam
Franklin Chang, NTT Communication Science Laboratories*

The accessibility hierarchy (AH) stratifies relative clause constructions in terms of the relativized NP's syntactic role (Keenan & Comrie 1977) and this is considered to be an implicational universal in typology. We explore here an account where similarity and frequency of the structures in the input are the primary sources of the AH. This input-based account is consistent with some syntax acquisition work (Diessel & Tomasello 2005).

We adapted the Chang, Dell, & Bock (2006) sentence production model for the generation of multi-clause utterances. The model was taught an English-like language through exposure to message-sentence pairs and its behavior during development displayed an AH pattern. We were able to manipulate and remove this pattern by varying properties of the input, and that suggests that the patterns of interference and facilitation among structures can help to explain the AH in processing and development within a connectionist learning model.

Notes

Session C--Conference Auditorium

Korean wh-constructions with Negative Polarity Items: L1 child, L2 child and L2 adult comparisons vis-à-vis development and convergence

*Hyang Suk Song and Bonnie D. Schwartz
University of Hawai'i*

This study investigates development up to convergence for Korean wh-constructions with Negative Polarity Items (NPIs) by English-Korean L2 adults, English-Korean L2 children and L1-Korean-acquiring children. While scrambling (OSV) in Korean (an SOV, wh-in-situ language) is generally optional, in the context of NPIs (e.g. *amwuto* 'anyone'), wh-phrases must scramble on the wh-question reading (Beck & Kim 1997):

- (1) **Amwuto mwues-ul sa-ci anh-ass-ni?*
anyone what-Acc buy-ci Neg-Past-Q
(cannot mean 'What did no one buy?')
- (2) *Mwues-ul amwuto sa-ci anh-ass-ni?*
'What did no one buy?'

The non-scrambled variant (e.g. (1)) has a yes/no-question reading (exclusively). These phenomena constitute poverty-of-the-stimulus problems for, not only L2ers whose L1 is English, but also L1 children. Elicited-production data, acceptability judgments and truth-value judgments show that adult and child L2ers follow the same route to convergence, including overcoming the poverty-of-the-stimulus problems, a route differing from-- yet subsuming--the L1-child route.

Session A--Metcalf Small

Rapid word-action mapping in French- and English-speaking children

*Yuriko Oshima-Takane, Jillian Satin and Ami Tint
McGill University*

The present study investigated whether French- and English-speaking 18-to 20-month-olds can map a novel verb onto an action when the object and action interpretations are equally possible using a habituation switch design. The results indicate that both French- and English-speaking children mapped the novel word onto the action rather than onto the object when the novel word was presented in a single intransitive sentence frame with an overt subject. This result is in clear contrast to the previous findings (Katerelos et al. 2003) that English- and French-speaking children mapped the novel words onto objects when isolated words were presented as linguistic stimuli in a similar design. These findings provide reliable evidence that French- and English-speaking children are able to use information from a verb sentence frame in the input as a means to form rapid associations between novel words and intransitive actions by 20 months of age.

Session B--East Balcony

A dynamic learning model for categorizing words using frames

*Hao Wang and Toben Mintz
University of Southern California*

The building blocks of grammars are categories like noun and verb, thus children must categorize words as part of language learning. This paper presents a dynamic learning model for lexical categorization. It uses the frame pattern (Mintz 2003), in which “two jointly occurring words with one word intervening” are categorizing contexts for the intervening words. Mintz’s procedure used the most frequent frames, requiring tallying the frequency of all frames in a corpus and categorizing words in a second pass. The present model is more psychologically plausible. It has a limited memory and a forgetting function, and posits frames dynamically, as it processes a corpus. Accurate categorization appeared after processing only a small portion of a corpus. These findings provide further evidence for the robustness of frames in categorizing words: With limited memory, and minimal processing, a learner could rapidly identify informative frames and start to use them to categorize words.

Session C--Conference Auditorium

Explicit instruction vs. linguistic competence in adult L2-acquisition: What they think you know and what you do know

*Alyona Belikova
McGill University*

Given the ongoing debate regarding the involvement of UG in adult L2-acquisition, it is important to explore L2-acquisition of linguistic phenomena that are consistently taught in the form of generalizations incompatible with what presumably characterizes human language. Will L2-ers avoid adopting such rules, even if very little positive counter-evidence is present in the PLD? Two different studies are reported on in answer to the question. The first experiment investigates adult L2-acquisition of Genitive of Negation in Russian where the classroom rule normally promotes a linguistically non-natural overgeneralization over environments licensing Genitive/Accusative alternation. The second study deals with adult L2-acquisition of the French reflexive/reciprocal clitic *se* systematically misrepresented by FSL teachers as an object pronoun. The conclusion so far is that L2-learners generally resist internalizing artificial rules advanced in the classroom, which is best interpreted as UG overwriting classroom instruction, thus supporting a UG access view on SLA.

Notes

Session A--Metcalf Small

Biases within or opportunities without? US and Chinese 14- and 18-month-olds' learning of novel words for agents, actions, and objects

Cheri C.Y. Chan, University of Michigan
Jie Chen, Peking University

Rachel Pulverman and Twila Tardif, University of Michigan
Xiangzhi Meng, Peking University

Research shows that English learners typically have early vocabularies dominated by nouns. Interestingly, data from naturalistic observations and vocabulary checklists have converged to show that Mandarin learners acquire relatively more verbs at an earlier time in development. This study examined the ability of English- and Mandarin-speaking 14- and 18-month-olds to learn new labels for Agents, Actions, and Objects, by habituating infants to two dynamic scenes, each accompanied by a bare novel word. Preliminary results indicated that at 14 months, English learners demonstrated emerging competence to learn words for Objects but not for Actions, whereas Mandarin learners showed emerging competence to learn words for Actions but not for Objects. Surprisingly, 14- and 18-month-old Mandarin learners failed to learn novel labels for Agents, whereas English learners succeeded in doing so at 14 months. Results are discussed in light of how culture moderates the timing and potency of different word-learning factors across development.

Session B--East Balcony

Investigating the memory mechanisms underlying the acquisition of the English past tense

Evan Kidd, University of Manchester
Jarrad Lum, Deakin University

Ullman (2004) suggested that two distinct memory mechanisms are used to form the past tense. Irregular past forms are claimed to be retrieved from declarative memory, where they are stored as independent lexical items. Conversely, regular past forms are claimed to be formed by the application of the rule 'add /ed/ to the stem', an operation for which procedural memory is responsible. This contrasts with the single route approach, which makes no sharp distinction between regular and irregulars. We report on an individual differences study that investigated the contribution of these different memory systems to 4-6-year-old children's knowledge of the past tense. One hundred children completed a battery of verbal and non-verbal tests. The results revealed no support for Ullman's model. Instead, the results strongly support the single mechanism approach where declarative memory predicts vocabulary, which in turn predicts performance on both regular and irregular verbs equally.

Notes

Blank lines for taking notes.

Session C--Conference Auditorium

Definiteness effects in the L2 English of Mandarin and Turkish speakers

Lydia White
McGill University

The English existential *there* construction permits indefinite DPs, (1a), but not definite DPs, (1b), the so-called Definiteness Effect (DE).

- (1) a. *There seems to be a man in the garden.*
- b. **There seems to be the man in the garden.*

Mandarin lacks articles and Turkish has only an indefinite article. L2ers with these L1s must associate the feature [\pm definite] with new morphological forms and must work out how the DE is implemented in English. An experiment was conducted, involving L2ers of intermediate proficiency. A number of existential sentences were elicited via picture description, including appropriate DPs with indefinite articles, weak quantifiers, or numerals. No DE violations were produced. Results suggest that L2ers integrate the semantic feature [\pm definite] with appropriate morphosyntactic realizations and that they are sensitive to subtle L2 phenomena, even though their L1s behave quite differently. In other words, the morphology/semantics interface is unproblematic, unlike other L2 interfaces.

Session A--Metcalf Small

What comes next?
 Infants' predictions about linguistic input

Alexa Romberg and Jenny Saffran
University of Wisconsin-Madison

Language contains regularities at every grain of analysis, and adult listeners who are sensitive to these statistics can make predictions about future input. Can infants also use statistics to anticipate what will come next? What kind of information can they use to inform their predictions? In this experiment we familiarized 16-month-old infants with three-word sentences; in some sentences the adjective alone was predictive of which noun would follow, in others it was not. Each noun was pictured at a specific location on a screen and the infants' eye movements were tracked. Infants used the adjective to anticipate the noun, looking more to the target location (on a blank screen) before the onset of the noun when the adjective was predictive than when it was not. This study provides evidence that infants make real-time predictions about linguistic input that are informed by distributional information.

Session B--East Balcony

An experimental study of children's comprehension of null subjects: Implications for grammatical/performance accounts

Robyn Orfitelli and Nina Hyams
University College London

Two classes of theories have endeavored to describe the 'null subject' phenomenon: grammatical and performance accounts. While indistinguishable given only spontaneous speech data, they differ in their predictions regarding comprehension. Grammatical accounts (e.g., Hyams 1986; Rizzi 2002) predict English-speaking children will understand and accept null subject sentences as grammatical declarative sentences (as in Italian), while performance accounts (e.g., Bloom 1990; Gerken 1991) hold that the child's and adult's grammar do not differ, and thus children should show adult comprehension.

30 children (2 ½-4 years) were administered a truth-value judgment task investigating their interpretation of null subject sentences. Until 3 ½ years, children consistently interpreted null subject sentences incorrectly, providing follow-up explanations consistent with a declarative interpretation. These results suggest that the null subject stage is a delay in comprehension as well as production, and we take them to support a grammatical, rather than performance, explanation for the null subject phenomenon.

Session C--Conference Auditorium

Hearing yourself think:
 Vocal and subvocal rehearsal in foreign language learning

Kristina Dahlen and Catherine Caldwell-Harris
Boston University

Foreign language learners rehearse the language they are learning, both vocally and subvocally as part of inner speech (Guerrero 2005). Novel words are rehearsed in the phonological loop long enough to be phonologically encoded in long-term memory (Baddeley et al. 1998). This study examined how manner of rehearsal and foreign language aptitude affect recall and recognition of foreign Turkish nouns. Subjects rehearsed either vocally, vocally without auditory feedback, subvocally, or using articulatory suppression and were evaluated for recall, recognition and skin conductance response. Manner of rehearsal had a larger effect than foreign language aptitude on both recall and recognition. The Subvocal rehearsal group outperformed the other three groups in syllable recall. The Subvocal and Vocal groups were best at recognizing Turkish words in sentences. It appears that those who rehearsed undisturbed learned the most, supporting the idea that inner speech plays an important role in foreign language learning.

Notes

Session A--Metcalf Small

22-month-olds detect verb-noun exchanges in fluent speech:
Evidence for category preferences for familiar content words

James L. Morgan, Brown University
Melanie Soderstrom, Boston University

In previous work, we found that 16-month-olds did not show sensitivity to exchanges of familiar nouns and verbs in fluent sentences, despite showing preferences for the grammatical sentences when the locations of inflections were manipulated. In this study, the sensitivity of older infants (18- and 22-month-olds) was examined in a modified Headturn Preference Procedure. By 22 months, infants showed a reliable preference for grammatical sentences over sentences in which familiar nouns and verbs were exchanged.

Despite the large number of words in English that function as both a noun and a verb (e.g. "to hug/a hug"), infants younger than 2 years old show preferences for the use of familiar single-category nouns and verbs in the appropriate grammatical category.

Session B--East Balcony

A developmental study of subject omission in child English

Mary Hughes and Shanley Allen
Boston University

The present study investigates the role that discourse-pragmatics plays developmentally in a non-null subject language by examining the utterances of four monolingual English-speaking children. The children's utterances were analyzed for subject omission at two different age ranges: Time 1 from 2;0 to 2;6 and Time 2 from 3;0 to 3;1. Following Hughes & Allen (2006), discourse-pragmatic information was encoded by the following features: absence, differentiation in context, differentiation in discourse, inanimacy, newness, and joint attention. Results demonstrate that the proportion of null subjects that have 'inaccessible' values for these discourse-pragmatic features decrease by as much as one-half between Time 1 and Time 2. Moreover, the proportion of third person null subjects also decreases. This study suggests that at around age three, children's cognitive abilities become more developed so that they have a greater sensitivity to discourse-pragmatics as well as a better understanding of the linguistic conventions of the target language.

Notes

Session C--Conference Auditorium

Age-of-acquisition effects in the development of a bilingual advantage for word learning

Margarita Kaushanskaya, University of Wisconsin-Madison
Viorica Marian, Northwestern University

Bilingualism can positively influence executive function/inhibitory control, phonological awareness, and vocabulary acquisition. Virtually all studies examining the effect of bilingualism on cognitive function consider the effects of early, life-long bilingualism. However, it is possible that later acquisition of a second language is sufficient to influence the development of the bilingual advantage. The current study tested the role of L2 acquisition age in the development of bilingual advantage for novel vocabulary learning. Monolingual English-speaking adults were compared to early English-Spanish bilinguals and to late English-Spanish bilinguals on acquisition of artificially-constructed novel words. Results revealed that early, but not late bilinguals outperformed monolingual speakers of English on the foreign word-learning task. The performance of late English-Spanish bilinguals fell in between that of early English-Spanish bilinguals and monolinguals. The current study indicates that *early* bilingualism is crucial for modification of the underlying cognitive system by the linguistic experience.

Session A--Metcalf Small
<p>Prosodic cues to noun and verb categories in infant-directed speech</p> <p><i>Rushen Shi and Annick Moisan University of Quebec</i></p> <p>We tested the hypothesis that grammatical categories are distinguished by prosodic cues in input. Sentences in French were created containing disyllabic pseudo-words serving as both nouns and verbs. Factors influencing prosody (utterance positions, sentence length, content-function-word alternations, and prosodic phrasal grouping) were balanced. This design enabled us to not only consider how syntactically ambiguous words are categorized, but also examine in a reliable way whether distinct prosodic cues exist generally in the language for nouns and verbs. Parents read the sentences to their 4- and 11-month-old infants, i.e., before versus at onset of vocabulary learning. Acoustic analyses revealed that nouns and verbs were different in vowel duration patterns in speech to both ages. F0 patterns also differed for the two categories, but only in speech to older infants. We conclude that nouns and verbs are prosodically marked in input, with cues stronger when infants start learning words and their categories.</p>

Session B--East Balcony
<p>Requestive speech leads to referential clarity in Turkish preschool children</p> <p><i>Aylin C. Küntay, Sevda Bahtiyar Hande Sungur and Ozlem Ozdamar Koç University</i></p> <p>5-year-old, 9-year-old, and adult speakers were asked to request a particular object from an array as part of an art-craft activity in three conditions: (1) common ground condition, where two similar objects of different sizes were visible both to the participants and the confederate; (2) privileged ground condition, where only one of two similar objects was visible to the confederate; and (3) baseline condition, with no similar objects. We found that (a) 5-year-olds produce less discriminating adjectives (e.g., <i>big scissors</i> to identify the larger sized among two scissors of different sizes) than older speakers, instead using bare nouns in labeling constructions, and (b) 5-year-olds produce more discriminating adjectives and fuller verbal constructions when prompted to form polite requestive speech acts (e.g., <i>big scissors-ACC take-AOR-YN-2SG</i>, “will you take the big scissors?”). 5-year-olds appear to provide uniquely identifying information to enable partners to determine what action exactly is desired in requestive constructions.</p>

Session C--Conference Auditorium
<p>The hierarchical acquisition of second language consonant sounds in bilingual kindergarten students</p> <p><i>Laura Reynolds, Haskins Laboratories Joanna Uhry, Fordham University</i></p> <p>The invented spelling and lower level auditory discrimination skills of non-native sounds of young Spanish-English bilingual children and English monolingual children were compared. The results suggest that kindergarten children who are able to perceive non-native sounds may still experience first language interference in their choice of letters during invented spelling, a more complex task. Bilingual children chose different letters to represent non-Spanish sounds and sounds that differed in voice onset time in their mistakes compared to the monolingual children. The children with more accurate invented spelling also had a larger English vocabulary, mirroring Kuhl’s work linking speech perception with language development (2005).</p> <p>These results support an interactive, hierarchical process of phonological acquisition and extend Werker and Tees’ cascading model (2005). Bilingual children who began to acquire their second language as early as the age of four may experience phonological interference from their first language during increasingly more complex tasks.</p>

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Cognitive consequences of bilingualism across the lifespan

Ellen Bialystok
York University

For actively fluent bilinguals, both languages are active when either one is being used. To avoid intrusions and produce fluent speech, a mechanism is needed to control attention to the target language. This selective attention appears to be achieved through domain general executive functions, and the constant exercise of these executive processes accelerates their development in children, enhances their efficiency in adulthood, and mitigates their decline in aging. At the same time, the representation and joint activation of two lexical systems compromises lexical access for bilinguals, making lexical generation slower or less efficient than in monolinguals. These consequences of bilingualism will be illustrated by describing research that has been conducted on bilinguals who speak a large variety of languages and who have been selected from across the lifespan. The results will be interpreted within a framework that invokes general cognitive processes to manage attention to two competing linguistic representational systems.

Surviving Linguistics: A Guide for Graduate Students

by Monica Macaulay

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POSTER SESSION I

Monolingual development of Spanish subject pronouns:
Sensitivity to continuity of reference

Naomi Lapidus Shin, University of Montana
Helen Smith Cairns, Queens College
and City University, New York

In adult Spanish a switch in reference promotes the use of overt subject pronouns, while no switch promotes subject omission. To investigate the development of this discourse predictor of pronoun use, a preference task was given to 149 children, ages 5;9 to 15;8, and 30 adults in Queretaro, Mexico. Narratives were elicited in a no-shared knowledge context. Adults strongly preferred overt pronouns in switch-reference contexts and nulls in same-reference contexts. Many of the youngest children preferred null pronouns in switch-reference contexts, revealing their difficulty with establishing clear referents for pronouns. There was also a trend among children who preferred null pronouns in switch-reference contexts to produce ambiguous pronouns in their narratives. By age nine, children significantly preferred overt pronouns in switch-reference contexts, but over-accepted overt pronouns in same-reference contexts. By age 14, children preferred null pronouns in same-reference contexts, but not to the degree adults did.

Notes

POSTER SESSION I

First language acquisition of elliptical structures in Cantonese

Lawrence Cheung
University of California, Los Angeles

This study investigates the sensitivity to two Cantonese elliptical structures among Cantonese-speaking children aged between 4 to 6. Previous studies (Thornton & Wexler 1999; Matsuo & Duffield 2001; Foley et al. 2003) found that English-speaking children (4-6-year-olds) are sensitive to VP Ellipsis Construction (VPEC). Chinese has VPEC and Null Object Construction (NOC) (Li 2002; Xu 2003). Despite superficial resemblance, the two constructions differ crucially in the recovery of the adverb in the antecedent clause. The adverbial is recovered in VPEC, but not in NOC. In the experiments, the subject matched the stimulus sentences against act-out scenarios. The results show that they are sensitive to the different possibility of adverbial recovery in these constructions. The judgment is particularly robust in their interpretation of VPEC. The study suggests early acquisition of elliptical structures in Cantonese.

Notes

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POSTER SESSION I

Early errors in sentence discourse structure: Evidence from the acquisition of thetic sentences in Russian

Elena Kallestinova
University of Iowa

Recent studies show that monolingual Russian young children (1;6-2;10) understand the topic-focus structure of Russian sentences. However, the question on how children interpret the all-focus structure of thetic (i.e., discourse-initial) sentences is left open. I argue that 3-/4-year-old children mistakenly assign topic-focus structure rather than all-focus structure to Russian thetic sentences. The supporting evidence comes from an elicitation experiment with 123 monolingual Russian pre-school age children and 47 adults. The results suggest that 3-/4-year-olds mistakenly assign focus to the sentence final constituent (object), and then overgeneralize strategies allowed in topic-focus sentences in adult grammar to thetic sentences. I propose that the mismatch between younger children and adults results from the immature Theory of Mind. If 3-/4-year-olds assume all information in a sentence as known to the hearer, then thetic all-focus sentences do not make much sense to them. Consequently, they treat thetic sentences similar to sentences with topic-focus structure.

Notes

POSTER SESSION I

Not all transitive subjects are agents: Exploring 23-month-olds' understanding of transitive sentences

Yael Gertner
University of Illinois, Urbana-Champaign

What is the nature of the semantic roles that toddlers map onto noun-phrase arguments in transitive sentences? 2-year-olds use word order to understand transitive sentences with novel verbs (Gertner et al. 2006): Upon hearing "*The boy is kradding the girl!*", they inferred that *kradding* described an action of the boy on the girl. These prior experiments focused on caused-motion events. This makes sense as a starting point: Verbs for causal action are prototypical transitive verbs, syntactically uniform across languages (Levin & Rappaport-Hovav 2005). But not all transitive subjects are causal agents. In the present research, we explored events that go well beyond the prototypical agent-patient case. Experiments 1-2 involved grooming events in which one character contacts another. Experiments 3-4 involved no contact, only the motion of two characters relative to one another. These findings suggest that 23-month-olds readily map transitive word order onto a broad range of event-role asymmetries.

POSTER SESSION I

Acquisition of gender in Russian

Oksana Tarasenkova
University of Connecticut

Two theoretical approaches to gender and declension in adult grammar are evaluated in this paper: Declension-to-Gender (Corbett 1982) and Gender-to-Declension (Crockett 1976). These approaches differ in their acknowledgment of what comes first: can a noun’s gender be predicted from its declension, or can nominal declensional class paradigm be derived from the gender of a noun. This paper reports the results of an elicited production experimental study, which investigated what kind of context children use more readily for the successful acquisition of the novel nouns’ gender. The results support the hypothesis that children’s performance on gender assignment depends on the kind of exposure: the condition where the novel noun was introduced in the context of its declensional paradigm is more facilitating for correct gender assignment than the condition of adjectival agreement context. This difference is taken as supporting the Declension-to-Gender model.

POSTER SESSION I

Comparing different approaches for using n-grams in syntax acquisition

Franklin Chang
NTT Communication Sciences Laboratories, NTT Corp.

N-grams are commonly used within accounts of syntax acquisition in computational linguistics and in developmental psycholinguistics. But while psycholinguists tend to examine the usefulness of individual n-gram statistics, computational linguists often use statistics with multiple different n-grams. To bridge between these two approaches, we tested several different n-grams learners within a Bag-of-words Incremental Generation (BIG) task with a Sentence Prediction Accuracy (SPA) evaluation measure with 14 adult-child corpora from 12 typologically-different languages (Chang, Lieven & Tomasello 2006). The BIG task asks how well can a system generate an appropriate word order for an utterance from an unordered bag of words. Our results suggest that multiple n-grams are more robust than individual n-grams, but including unigram statistics might have a negative influence on word ordering processes in some language typologies.

POSTER SESSION I

The acquisition of Hebrew tense

Leah Paltiel-Gedalyovich, Aviya Hacoen
Rachel Eitan and Jeannette Schaeffer
Ben-Gurion University of the Negev

The acquisition of tense in morphologically rich languages has been shown to be relatively error-free and early. However, these data come primarily from spontaneous speech. The use of controlled experiments in Hebrew reveals a clear delay in the acquisition of tense.

We tested 57 TD monolingual Hebrew-speaking children aged 4;2-12;9 and 9 adult controls on their knowledge of tense inflection with a completion task. While all children were (near) adult-like in their retention of agreement morphology and verb pattern, the younger children produce appropriate (past and future) tense morphology only 63% of the time.

We argue that these errors result from the fact that the present tense in Hebrew is participial, and thus non-finite. When young children do not succeed in mapping past or future to the correct tense morphology, they rely on the non-finite properties of the present tense form, allowing for present, past or future interpretation.

Notes

POSTER SESSION I

Spatial asymmetries in language and memory

*Anna Papafragou
University of Delaware*

Recent research has demonstrated an asymmetry between the origins and endpoints of motion events, with preferential attention given to endpoints rather than beginnings of motion in both language and memory (Lakusta & Landau 2005; Lakusta 2005; Regier & Zheng 2007; Lakusta, Wagner, O’Hearn & Landau 2007). Here we explore this asymmetry further by asking whether the specificity of encoding source/goal relations differs in both spatial memory and the acquisition of novel spatial vocabulary. We find that endpoint changes are detected more accurately than source changes by both adults and 5-year-olds. We also find that, in acquiring novel motion verbs, endpoint distinctions are more precisely drawn than source distinctions in the same populations. Taken together, these studies demonstrate that a cognitive-attentional bias in spatial representation and memory affects the specificity of hypotheses about spatial referents that learners build during the acquisition of spatial language.

POSTER SESSION I

Acquiring multiple contextual and syntactic mappings:
The emergence of spatial terms

*Heidi Waterfall, Cornell University
Priya Shimpi, University of Shizuoka
Janellen Huttenlocher, University of Chicago*

The present study concerns children’s acquisition of a common set of spatial terms (*up, down, in, out, on, off*). Using naturalistic data from 46 mother-infant dyads from 14 through 30 months, the study examines linguistic and contextual uses of spatial terms over time.

Earlier studies (Huttenlocher, Smiley & Charney 1983; Tomasello 1987) suggest that children initially may use these words to encode movement rather than static relations. Prior work has been limited by exclusive focus on either linguistic or contextual analyses and by small datasets. We analyze the emergence and use of these terms in children’s speech by integrating contextual and syntactic uses. We also extend these analyses to parents’ speech. Thus, we are the first study to integrate contextual and syntactic information with parent language input when investigating these terms. We show that there is a strong relationship between parents’ use of these terms and their development in children’s speech.

Notes

POSTER SESSION I

How acoustic cues in infant-directed speech facilitate
word recognition

*Jae Yung Song and Katherine Demuth
Brown University*

This study investigated how acoustic characteristics in infant-directed speech (IDS) enhance infants’ vocabulary development. Using the Intermodal Preferential Looking Procedure, we examined the individual roles of three typical acoustic characteristics of IDS in 19-month-olds’ familiar word recognition: slower speech rate, exaggerated pitch, and hyperarticulated vowels. Results showed that infants looked longer at the target when they listened to sentences in typical IDS compared to accelerated IDS. In contrast, infants’ ability to recognize words was not affected by exaggerated pitch and hyperarticulated vowels. Further investigation of individual mothers’ IDS showed a positive correlation between their vowel duration in sentence-medial position and infants’ vocabulary size. The implications of these findings for the role of slow speech rate in young children’s vocabulary development, as well as intervention of children with language disorders, are discussed.

POSTER SESSION I

Exaggerated prosody in infant-directed speech? Intonational phonological analysis of Japanese infant-directed speech

Yosuki Igarashi, The Japanese Society for the Promotion of Science

Reiko Mazuka, Duke University

Exaggerated intonation is claimed to be a universal characteristic of infant-directed (ID) speech. However, analyses of the ID intonation are generally based on purely physical measurements of overall fundamental frequency contours without reference to the linguistic structure of intonation, and thus the understanding of ID intonation has been limited. In this study, we examine the intonation of Japanese ID speech by analyzing the RIKEN Japanese Mother-Infant Conversation Corpus which provides, along with the speech signals for AD and ID speech of 22 mothers, various annotations such as segments, morphology and intonation (based on ToBI). The results reveal that differences between AD and ID speech are not observed equally through an overall contour, but localized at the specific points of the utterance, most notably at the end of intonational phrases. They are found, for example, in the distribution of categories of phrase-final boundary tones, and in phonetic modifications within each tonal category.

POSTER SESSION I

Mechanisms of LF priming: Data from Kannada and English

Jeffrey Lidz and Anastasia Conroy
University of Maryland

Viau, Lidz and Musolino (2006) showed that contextual factors increase children's ability to access inverse-scope for sentences like (1), and that accessing that interpretation carries over to less supportive contexts. Two experiments strengthen the case for LF priming, but only for dispreferred interpretations.

In Experiment 1, the nonisomorphic interpretation of the split-partitive (2) primes the same interpretation of (3) in Kannada-speaking 4-yr-olds. The default isomorphic interpretation of (3) does not prime that interpretation of (2). In Experiment 2, English-speaking adults exhibit priming for the dispreferred, isomorphic, interpretation of (1) but not for the nonisomorphic interpretation.

- (1) *Every dog doesn't have a hat*
- (2) *avanu ii seebu-gaL-alli eradu orey-al-illa*
'He didn't peel two apples.'
(lit. He didn't peel two from these apples)
- (3) *avanu eraDu seebu orey-al-illa*
'He didn't peel two apples'

POSTER SESSION I

Below the surface:
Hierarchy and abstraction in children's dative verb phrases

Joshua Viau, Johns Hopkins University
Jeffrey Lidz, University of Maryland

We demonstrate that 4-year-olds represent the internal structure of dative VPs (*give John the ball/give the ball to John*), in which the relative depth of embedding determines binding possibilities. In our Experiments 1 and 2, children accepted grammatical coreference/binding significantly more often than ungrammatical coreference/binding across dative constructions in a Truth Value Judgment task, indicating that children know the configurational properties of dative VPs with respect to Principle C and quantifier-variable binding in English. C-command, linear order, and derivational history were confounded in Experiments 1-2. To address this, Experiment 3 used the same procedure and stimuli as Experiment 2 with 4-year-old learners of Kannada, where free word order allows us to tease these factors apart. Again, children showed the adult-like pattern of grammaticality judgments. Together these results show that both English- and Kannada-speaking 4-year-olds have abstract, hierarchical structures for dative VPs and that these non-surface configurational properties determine binding possibilities.

Notes

POSTER SESSION I

Integration of linguistic knowledge in early and late English-Spanish bilinguals

*Rebecca Foote
Michigan State University*

Recent research suggests that adult L2 learners (late bilinguals) may have persistent difficulties integrating L2 structures that are not instantiated in their L1, due to a lack of underlying integrated knowledge of those structures (Jiang 2004, 2007). In contrast, early bilinguals show advantages in aspects of language use that require this type of automatic knowledge (Guillemon & Grosjean 2001). This study investigated whether both early and late English-Spanish bilinguals evidence automatic knowledge in Spanish by examining their sensitivity to agreement errors. Participants (20 early, 20 late bilinguals, 50 controls) read word-by-word 96 sentences, half grammatical and half ungrammatical due to person, number, or gender agreement errors. Comparisons of reading times for grammatical and ungrammatical sentences indicated that all bilinguals showed sensitivity to person and gender errors, but only early bilinguals were sensitive to number errors. Results are discussed in terms of the processing of long-distance versus adjacent agreement elements.

POSTER SESSION I

Children’s interpretation of wide scope disjunction in negative context

*Chunyuan Jing
University of Maryland*

A sentence that contains negation and an NP containing a disjunction (e.g., “John didn’t eat the soup or the dish”) could, in principle, allow for scopal interaction between the two logical operators. However, the narrow scope disjunction interpretation entails the wide scope disjunction interpretation. Previous studies claim that the semantic subset principle predicts that children learning any language will begin with just the narrow scope disjunction interpretation. Our current study shows that Chinese- and English-learning children are able to access both interpretations under appropriate discourse conditions at age 4, thus undermining the observational basis for the applicability of the semantic subset principle in this case. Moreover, while adult-Japanese only allows the wide scope disjunction interpretation, adult-Chinese and adult-English exhibit both interpretations, which means adult-Japanese is actually a subset of adult-Chinese/English in this respect.

Notes

POSTER SESSION I

The role of siblings in the English language development of bilingual toddlers in the U. S.

*Kelly Bridges and Erika Hoff
Florida Atlantic University*

Caregivers of 62 toddlers (Mean age = 22.55 months, SD = 3.90) acquiring English in bilingual homes provided information on home language use and on the toddlers’ English vocabulary development using the MacArthur-Bates Communicative Development Inventory (CDI). The overall portion of the children’s input that was in English was significantly related to the children’s English vocabulary percentile scores $r(60) = .34, p = .007$. For those toddlers with older siblings, the percent of sibling input that was in English was a significant correlate $r(51) = .411, p < .05$. CDI percentile scores were higher for children who spoke to their sibling(s) in English ($M = 45.45, SD = 27.88, n = 11$) than in Spanish ($M = 5.00, SD = 0.00, n = 2$) or a mix of English and Spanish ($M = 20.00, SD = 26.01, n = 16$), $F(2, 26) = 5.21, p < .01$.

POSTER SESSION I

Language-specific stress perception by 9-month-old French and Spanish infants

Katrin Skoruppa, University of Paris
Ferran Pons, University of British Columbia
Anne Christophe, Laboratoire de Sciences Cognitives et Psycholinguistique,
Laura Bosch, University of Barcelona
Emmanuel Dupoux, Laboratoire de Sciences Cognitives et Psycholinguistique,
Núria Sebastián-Gallés, University of Barcelona
Rita Alves Limissuri and Sharon Peperkamp, Laboratoire de Sciences Cognitives et Psycholinguistique

When and how does infants' perception of non-segmental features (such as stress) adapt to their native language? Compared to speakers of Spanish (a language with contrastive stress), adult speakers of French (a language with fixed stress) have great difficulties in perceiving stress contrasts. Here, we show that this language-specific difference already exists in 9-month-old infants: Spanish infants successfully distinguish stress-initial from stress-final non-words in a familiarization head-turn preference paradigm, while French infants show no sign of discrimination. In a control experiment using only one non-word, French infants succeed in the task, suggesting that their failure in the first experiment does not reflect low-level phonetic difficulties, but abstract stress perception problems.

POSTER SESSION I

The interpretation of pronouns and reflexives: Evidence from German kindergarten children

Esther Ruigendijk, Oldenburg University
Naama Friedmann, Tel Aviv University
Cornelia Hamann and Christina Kolling, Oldenburg University

Dutch and English-speaking children allow for local co-reference in sentences like '*Peter tickles him*'. This phenomenon is even stronger in ECM-sentences ('*Peter saw him dance*'). In Romance languages, which have clitic pronouns, the effect is found for ECM-sentences only. This has been related to properties of clitics. Therefore for German pronouns, the Dutch pattern is expected.

We examined 33 German-speaking children (aged 4-6) with a Picture Selection Task including simple and ECM-sentences. The children performed at chance-level only on ECM-sentences, unlike Dutch and similar to Spanish-speaking children. German pronouns can occur in a high position (*Sieht ihn der Junge?*, '*sees him the boy?*'), which is reminiscent of Romance, and might guide children to zoom in on the target faster. We present preliminary data from a truth value judgment task including pronouns in ECM-sentences in complement and high position, which show a slightly better performance for pronouns in the high position.

POSTER SESSION I

Talking books: What do children comprehend?

Julia Parish-Morris, Temple University
Molly Collins, Erikson Institute
Kathy Hirsh-Pasek, Temple University

The type of parent-child talk that promotes school readiness is diminished when parents read electronic console books with their 3- and 5-year-old children (Collins et al. 2006; Parish-Morris et al. 2007). Do differences in parental talk affect 3-year-old children's comprehension of the story? After parents and children read either an electronic or traditional book together, children answered four types of story comprehension questions. Results revealed that electronic console books have a dampening effect on children's ability to accurately answer questions about the content and chronology of a story. Thus, more expensive, more technologically advanced electronic books contribute less to emergent literacy skills and school readiness than plain, old-fashioned traditional books. This has important policy implications for fostering good readers.

Notes

POSTER SESSION I

“Oh my gosh!”: Evaluation and voicing in narratives from a cross-linguistic perspective

*Agnes Bolonyai and Mary Kohn
North Carolina State University*

Narrative competence includes the discourse-pragmatic ability to represent events, actors, and motivations from an evaluative-interpretive perspective (Bamberg and Damrad-Frye 1991). Comparing evaluative content in bilingual and monolingual children’s narratives, we examine whether bilingualism affects the use and functions of evaluative devices in narrative performance. Data were elicited from ten subjects (six Hungarian-English bilinguals, two monolinguals in each language), ages 6 to 9, using the picture book *Frog, Where Are You?* (Mayer 1969). The analysis indicates a bilingual advantage with respect to the number and range of evaluative devices, an advantage that increases with age. The variety of evaluative devices also correlates with the use of advanced vocabulary. Only bilinguals use voicing strategies, and mostly so when narrating in Hungarian. Appraisal, however, is more frequent in English. We argue that awareness of an evaluative-interpretive perspective in constructing narratives constitutes an aspect of discourse-pragmatic competence where bilinguals have an advantage over monolinguals.

POSTER SESSION I

Assessing parental goals and strategies for nurturing Arabic-English bilingualism in preschool children

*Mona M. Abo-Zena
Tufts University*

Few research studies have explored how families generally establish heritage language traditions given the sometimes competing academic, linguistic, cultural, familial, and societal demands. Parents promote the bilingual development of their children for a variety of reasons, and with a range of goals regarding proficiency. Parents may reconsider their goals when their children enter preschool because the discontinuity between home language and school language may reduce their child’s ability to engage effectively in social interactions and may present academic challenges. This study analyzes survey and interview data from 75 Arabic bilingual families with children ages 3-5 and describes parents’ expressed goals about bilingualism, summarizes the language strategies parents report using, and identifies broader contextual factors that may hinder or facilitate bilingualism goals. The study contributes to a growing body of literature relevant to parents, researchers, and practitioners on bilingualism, emerging biliteracy, and early socialization experiences to promote bicultural identity development.

Notes

POSTER SESSION I

Phonological knowledge trumps salient local regularity in 2-year-olds’ word learning

*Carolyn Quam and Daniel Swingley
University of Pennsylvania*

Acquiring phonology should make some things “harder” to learn. As native-language phonology constrains interpretations of linguistic input, learning nonnative contrasts should become more difficult. In English, pitch cannot contrast words. If an English learner hears a novel word with a distinctive pitch contour, she should attribute the pitch to sentence-level--not word-level--variation. Here we show that 2-year-olds do not consider large, highly salient pitch movements to “belong” to novel words. Children were taught a new word. In teaching, the word had consistent segmental and pitch-movement characteristics. Word recognition for correct and deviant pronunciations was tested using eyetracking. Mispronunciations of vowel quality impaired recognition. But large changes in the word’s pitch pattern did not affect recognition. Speech perception is not just about discrimination. It is also about interpretation of perceptible variation. By age 2, children already apply knowledge of English phonology to override local characteristics of their experience with words.

POSTER SESSION I

Structural priming depends on semantic similarity in 4-year-olds but not 5-year-olds

*Micah B. Goldwater and Catharine H. Echols
University of Texas, Austin*

Evidence has been accumulating that young children’s grammatical constructions, unlike adults’ abstract grammatical constructions, are based on particular lexical items. Item-based accounts emphasize gradual abstraction, predicting there should be a period during which children’s grammars are not item-based, but are not yet as abstract as adults’. Little evidence for this “partial abstraction” phase currently exists.

Evidence for abstract grammar in adults is shown by “structural priming” i. e. conversants match syntactic form. If a partial abstraction period is characterized by grammatical constructions being linked with a semantic class of words, and not a single word, then priming may be shown only when there is high semantic overlap across utterances. We find that 4-year-olds only show priming when there is high semantic overlap, but 5-year-olds show priming in both the high and low semantic overlap conditions, supporting the claim that grammatical constructions are gradually abstracted.

POSTER SESSION I

Do 12-month-olds expect that speech can be used to communicate a goal?

*Alia Martin and Athena Vouloumanos, New York University
Kristine H. Onishi, McGill University*

Infants treat speech as a special signal, listening to speech over other sounds and using speech to inform their expectations about objects, categories, and people. We ask what infants know about the communicative function of speech, specifically that speech can be used to communicate a goal. 12-month-old infants were familiarized with an actor’s reaching preference for one of two objects (target object). When the actor could no longer reach for the target object but a second actor now present on the scene could, infants expected the second actor to hand over the target object if the first actor uttered a nonsense word. They were surprised if the second actor handed over the target object if the first actor emitted an emotional expression (“ooh”), unless the second actor had been present during the familiarization scenes. Infants therefore expect that speech can be used to communicate a goal.

POSTER SESSION I

Toddlers’ word learning in foreign-accented speech

*Rachel Schmale and George Hollich
Purdue University*

Using a Preferential Looking Procedure, three experiments examined whether toddlers have a harder time learning words presented in foreign-accented speech versus changing talkers across training and test. In Experiment 1, 15- and 24-month-olds were taught and tested on their comprehension of a novel word by a female talker in Spanish-accented English. Results from toddlers at both ages indicated that they learned the word. Experiment 2 tested toddlers’ abilities to generalize this word across two English talkers. Although 24-month-olds succeeded in this generalization task, despite familiarity with English, 15-month-olds did not. This suggests that generalization across talkers (even very similar talkers) may be more difficult than dealing with foreign-accented speech. Experiment 3 (in progress), addresses how toddlers accommodate variability across accent and talkers by teaching them a word in accented English and testing them on that word spoken in native English, and vice versa.

Notes

POSTER SESSION I

Is selective attrition possible in Russian-English bilinguals?

*Elena Zaretsky, University of Massachusetts, Amherst
Eva G. Bar-Shalom, University of Connecticut*

This paper addresses the issue of attrition of grammatical aspect and other grammatical categories in bilingual (Russian-English) adults and children. Prior research has shown aspectual, lexical, agreement and case marking errors in this population. Of specific interest was a possible hierarchy of attrition in various areas of L1, based on the length of uninterrupted exposure to L1. An elicited narrative (*One Frog Too Many* by M. & M. Mayer) and a Grammaticality Judgment task were used to address the participants' competence in Russian grammar. Our results indicate that both groups show signs of attrition in all above-mentioned grammatical categories. Significant between groups difference were found in the magnitude of attrition, based on the length of exposure to L1. However, the aspectual errors were seen only in children immersed in L2 (English) from birth. Thus, our results indicate that grammatical aspect may be the least sensitive category of attrition.

POSTER SESSION I

ERP evidence for impaired processing of wh-questions in children with SLI

*Baila Tropper, City University, New York
Arild Hestvik, University of Delaware
Valerie Shafer and Richard Schwartz,
City University, New York*

Children with specific language impairment (SLI) comprehend and produce object questions as compared to subject questions more poorly than typically developing (TD) children. We report a study that used event-related potentials (ERP) to explore the processes underlying this difference. The participants included 17 TD and 13 SLI children (mean ages = 10;3, 10;1 years) and 14 adults with normal language (mean age=28). Object and subject questions based on preceding discourse were auditorily presented. ERPs in the right and left anterior regions revealed a sustained anterior positivity for object relative to subject questions in the TD group. The SLI group showed this effect in a small section of the right anterior region. Normal adults demonstrated a sustained left anterior negativity for object questions, consistent with prior evidence for adults. We interpret the sustained positivity in children as an index of syntactic working memory over the filler-gap distance in object questions and suggest that this process is deficient in SLI.

Notes

POSTER SESSION I

Finding AGENTs and PATIENTs

*Shakila Shayan and Lisa Gershkoff-Stowe
Indiana University*

Knowledge of semantic roles such as AGENT and PATIENT is at the core of children's syntactic knowledge but little is known about the nature and the origin of such knowledge. The traditional view is that children possess an abstract notion of roles as a pre-requisite to language. This research argues for an alternative view, one in which knowledge of AGENT-PATIENT roles emerges hand-in-hand with the knowledge of verbs on a case-by-case basis.

In two studies we explored the nature of this knowledge and its underlying learning mechanism. In an analogy task, we measured 3-5-yrs-old children's generalization between AGENTs and between PATIENTs in related novel scenes while manipulating various aspects of the event depicted in the scenes. Results indicate significant main effects of age and condition, suggesting that children's initial knowledge of roles is fragile and local; Children have difficulty generalizing their knowledge in the absence of familiar cues associated with AGENT-PATIENT.

POSTER SESSION I

Explaining why *gonna* precedes *will* in acquisition

*Peter Klecha, Joseph Jalbert
Alan Munn and Christina Schmitt
Michigan State University*

We study CHILDES data (MacWhinney 2000) for seven children and their parents, confirming Stephany's (1986) findings that *gonna* precedes *will* in child language acquisition. We test two hypotheses about the emergence of *will* and *gonna*, based on Copley's (2002) semantic analysis, which suggests *will* is the simple future, and that *gonna* consists of *will* scoped over by a progressive operator. The Frequency Hypothesis: There is more *gonna* in the input, resulting in earlier acquisition. This is rejected; parental data suggests that *will* is more prevalent. The Progressive Hypothesis: Children initially treat *gonna* as a simple progressive, before modality emerges. This is also rejected; *gonna* is used with states freely, and *gonna* is used with future meaning from earliest instances. We propose a refined semantic account; that *will*, and not *gonna*, involves contextual integration, accounting for the later acquisition of *will*.

POSTER SESSION I

Informing debates on the L2 steady state:
N-drop at the initial state of L3 Portuguese

*Jason Rothman, Michael Iverson
Jennifer Cabrelli and Tiffany Judy
University of Iowa*

Only recently has there been an increased interest in generative L3 acquisition studies (see Leung 2007 inter alia). Studying L3 acquisition is interesting in its own right, since there are different variables to consider; nevertheless, studying L3 acquisition can also provide insight into theoretical debates within formal approaches to adult L2A (cf. Leung 2005, 2007). In this paper, we test for nominal ellipsis (N-drop) at the initial state of two L3 groups: English-Spanish additive adult bilinguals (n=22) and English-Spanish successive childhood bilingual learners of L3 Portuguese (n=18). We compare these groups to an independent group of English learners of L2 Portuguese at the initial state (n=20). Both L3 groups (unlike the L2 group) demonstrate knowledge of N-drop at the initial state of Portuguese, suggesting that the additive Spanish bilinguals acquired the interpretable and uninterpretable Spanish gender and number features crucial to acquiring N-drop (White et al. 2004), which provides evidence against theories of partial access for L2 acquisition.

POSTER SESSION I

Joint attention and child-directed signing in
American Sign Language

*Ginger Pizer, Kathleen M. Shaw and Richard P. Meier
University of Texas, Austin*

This study analyzes child-directed ASL inside and outside episodes of joint attention at three to four ages (9-24 months) for each of three mother-child dyads. Signs were coded for modifications from their citation form: spatial displacement, lengthening, and repetition, among others. Our findings were consistent with the idea that joint attention episodes are a privileged state for vocabulary learning. At all sessions, the number of lexical sign tokens produced per minute was higher inside joint attention than outside joint attention. At most sessions, a higher percentage of the mothers' sign productions were modified inside joint attention episodes. Modifications such as lengthening and repetition did not appear to function to attract an inattentive child's gaze, as the child was already looking at the parent's face or hands at the beginning of a majority of modified sign tokens. These modifications may serve other discourse functions, e.g., eliciting a child's imitation.

Notes

Session A--Metcalf Small

Numerosity and number signs in deaf Nicaraguan adults

*Molly Flaherty, University of Edinburgh
Ann Senghas, Columbia University*

Because Nicaragua did not have a sign language until 25 years ago, many older deaf Nicaraguans did not learn a language or counting sequence until adulthood. This study examines the relationship between the acquisition of number words and their sequence (i.e., counting) and the ability to mentally represent exact quantities and to perform mental operations on them. Adults and adolescents performed one-to-one matching with objects (checkers) and ephemeral events (shoulder taps) for small (1-4) and large quantities (5-13), and counted to 130 (if able). Performance was markedly worse with ephemeral events than objects, both in receiving and producing quantities, across groups. Counting ability predicted performance on the ephemeral tasks. These data suggest that number words, in a memorized sequence, are applied to the task of encoding and producing precise quantities, and that the unconventionalized signs available in the 1970s were as effective as modern conventionalized signs to enable this learning.

Session B--East Balcony

Evidence of Principle C in 30-month-olds

*Cynthia Lukyanenko and Anastasia Conroy
University of Maryland, College Park*

We show that infants as young as 30 months demonstrate knowledge of Principle C, the constraint prohibiting coreference between a name and a c-commanding pronoun. Previous research has shown that 4-year-olds obey the constraint, and this has been taken as evidence that it is innate. However, because much language learning occurs before age 4, this data is also consistent with the constraint being learned. Using 30 month old infants, an early age at which grammatical structure is plausibly developing, we tested knowledge of Principle C using a Preferential Looking task. We found that 30-month-olds succeeded with Principle C. We also found that the infants with the smallest vocabularies (<500 words) did not show knowledge of the constraint, while infants with larger vocabularies (>500 words) did. This suggests that vocabulary acquisition places a lower bound on children's ability to adhere to grammatical principles.

Notes

Session C--Conference Auditorium

Bilingual children's acquisition of English inflection:
The role of language dominance and task type

*Johanne Paradis and Antoine Tremblay, University of Alberta
Martha Crago, Université de Montréal*

French-English bilinguals (age=6;6-6;11) were given a standardized test with two production probes and a grammaticality judgment task for the English inflections third person singular [-s] (3S-s) and past tense [-ed] (PAST). Language dominance was ascertained on the basis of size of lexicon and frequency of exposure to the two languages. Bilingual children's accuracy for the 3S-s and the PAST probes was significantly lower than that of monolingual age-mates. However, the English-dominant bilinguals performed better than the French-dominant bilinguals, and similarly to the monolinguals, for production of these morphemes. In contrast, children's judgments of morpheme omissions were closer to those of their monolingual age-mates, and dominance group-based differences were diminished. Therefore, bilinguals' production of inflection was more sensitive to reduced input, as shown by comparisons with monolinguals and between dominance groups, than their grammaticality judgments. Results are discussed in terms of their mixed support for Usage-Based theory predictions.

Session A--Metcalf Small

Predicting childhood vocabulary from infant word segmentation abilities

*Leher Singh, Sarah S. Nestor
Jennifer Paulson and Kristine E. Strand
Boston University*

Before they can begin to relate sound to meaning, infants in the first year of life must be able to segment words out of fluent speech. While the capacity for word segmentation is a prerequisite to vocabulary development, the extent to which word segmentation predicts later word learning has yet to be determined. In a prospective, longitudinal study, 40 infants were tracked from 7.5 to 36 months. Infants were tested at 7.5, 9, and 10.5 months on different word segmentation tasks. At 36 months, children received a summative assessment of vocabulary skills using the EVT, the PPVT and free speech measures. Analyses at 36 months yielded several outcome measures that were effectively predicted by infant word segmentation skills. Furthermore, infant word segmentation skills predicted aspects of syntactic as well as lexical development. In sum, these studies provide evidence for the predictive validity of infant word segmentation tasks, suggesting continuity in the development of word knowledge in infancy and childhood.

Session B--East Balcony

Invisible to Condition C:
Apparent binding violations in child and adult Thai

*Napasri Timyam, Kasetsart University
Kamil Ud Deen, University of Hawai'i at Manoa*

We investigate Condition C in Thai, a language that supposedly violates Condition C. We first show that 20 Thai adults treat unmodified R-expressions like bound variables (pronouns), as per Larson (2005; Lee 2003), but R-expressions modified by classifiers/demonstratives as true R-expressions subject to Condition C. We conducted two TVJT experiments on 15 children (3;3-5;9). The results are:

Experiment 1: Children allow bound readings of modified and unmodified R-expressions, suggesting that unlike adults, children treat all R-expressions as bound variables. If correct, R-expressions in child Thai should be subject to Condition B.
Experiment 2: Younger children allow local coreference between R-expressions (violating Condition B), while older children reject local coreference. This shows that the binding properties of R-expressions are subject to the Delay in Condition B effect.

Thai children initially treat all R-expressions as bound variables, only to later analyze modified R-expressions as structurally larger constituents, and thus subject to Condition C.

Session C--Conference Auditorium

Early sensitivity to information structure in Japanese

*Jun Nomura
University of Hawai'i at Manoa*

Although Japanese is verb-final, postposing of NPs, PPs, etc. does occur in casual speech. Existing studies claim that two of the major functions of post-verbal elements (Tails) are Defocusing and Topic Changes. Defocused Tails, which occur with no prior pause, generally carry old information. Topic Change Tails, which involve an exact repetition of a pre-verbal element, are new.

I analyzed postposing in 21 adult-to-adult and 21 mother-child (1;8—2;11) conversations. The results show that pause-less, unrepeated Tails (Defocusing) are predominantly old while repeated ones (Topic Changes) are new in all three corpora (adults, mothers and children). This suggests that although discourse pragmatics is often claimed to develop late, 2-year-olds capture the information structure of Defocusing and Topic Changes appropriately. I argue that children's apparent insensitivity to discourse pragmatics observed in some studies may be artifacts of the experimental method.

Notes

Session A--Metcalf Small

Is exposure enough? Narrative development in internationally adopted children

*Jillian Schuh and Inge-Marie Eigsti,
University of Connecticut*

Julia Evans, San Diego State University

Seth Pollak and Jon Miller, University of Wisconsin-Madison

In international adoption, we can disentangle language domains that are sensitive to the sheer volume of second-language exposure from those that reflect individual differences in learners due to institutionalization. This study examined narratives from 5- to 9-year-old adoptees and controls. Early and late adoptees were matched on months of English exposure. Findings indicated that lexical skill and morphological errors were associated with English exposure, whereas syntactic complexity and pragmatic skills were associated with duration of institutionalization. While morphosyntactic and lexical abilities correlated with standardized assessments, discourse domains were unrelated, indicating that results do not reflect simple domain-general delays. Results suggest that the stress associated with institutionalization impacts language development beyond exposure to English, potentially in a dose-dependent manner.

Session B--East Balcony

A tough test of the locality requirement on reflexives

*Andrea Zukowski and Rebecca McKeown,
University of Maryland*
Jaiva Larsen, Georgetown University

Evidence that young children strictly bind reflexives to structurally local antecedents is less definitive than popularly believed. Children have performed best in act-out tasks, which may merely reflect a preference for a local antecedent. Using a novel task, we show that by age 5;0 children consistently reject non-local antecedents for reflexives.

Participants (n = 16, age 5;0—5;6) judged the grammaticality of sentences like (1).

- 1) a. *Mom forgot that Uncle Tim scratched himself.*
b. **Uncle Tim forgot that Mom scratched himself.*

Children correctly rejected sentences like (1b) and accepted sentences like (1a) (mean = 86% correct, mean A' = .90). We discuss methodological details of our task that we think were critical to observing this excellent level of performance. Additionally, 13 adolescents with Williams syndrome (age 8–17) were tested (mean = 85% correct, mean A' = .89). This is the first demonstration that Williams syndrome adolescents know the locality requirement for reflexives.

Notes

Session C--Conference Auditorium

The no-negative evidence problem and the retreat from (dative) over-generalization errors: Children’s and adults’ sensitivity to verb frequency, verb semantics and morphological constraints

*Julian M. Pine, Ben Ambridge and Caroline F. Rowland
University of Liverpool*

How do children learn that certain verbs may not be used in certain argument structure constructions? The entrenchment hypothesis (Braine & Brooks 1995) states that repeated presentation of a verb in one construction (e.g., prepositional dative) constitutes probabilistic evidence that it may not be used in non-attested constructions (e.g., double-object dative). Alternatively (Pinker 1989) children may form semantic and morpho-phonologically-based classes of items that appear in particular constructions only. To investigate these hypotheses, participants (5-6yrs, 9-10yrs, and adults) rated ungrammatical, double-object datives (and various grammatical control sentences) with high frequency, low frequency and novel verbs (half “native-like”, half “Latinate”) from each of four semantic classes. In general, participants correctly rejected double-object-dative uses of all verbs that did not denote transfer of possession (e.g., *Marge *pulled/*dragged/*blicked her friend the box*), and of possession-transfer verbs with “Latinate” morpho-phonology (e.g., *Lisa *contributed/*donated/*orgulated the library the book*). Frequency effects were also observed.

Session A--Metcalf Small

Intermediate traces and anaphora resolution in the processing of English as a second language

*Laurent Dekydtspotter, Boubacar Diakite, Bora Kim, Hye-Kyung Kim, Hyun-jin Kim, Jong Kun Lee, Marwa Ragheb, Hyun Kyoung Seo, and Yi-Ting Wang
Indiana University*

Clahsen & Felser (2006a, b) argue that second language (L2) processing does not involve intermediate traces, following Felser et al. (2003) and Marinis et al. (2005). Reconstruction in trace positions in the processing of anaphoric relations provides a solid test of the hypothesis. With two reading-time (RT) tasks in the moving-window format, we examine the processing of sentences such as *A picture of himself / him, John insisted that Mary burnt on Tuesday*. If intermediate traces are posited in L2 sentence processing, we expect to find differences in RTs on the complementizer *that* reflecting the processing of co-reference for matrix-clause versus embedded-clause antecedents and differences reflecting the processing of co-reference for anaphor versus pronouns construed with matrix-clause antecedents. We show that processing by a group of 29 learners of English indeed has precisely these characteristics. This threatens the hypothesis that L2 learners cannot access detailed syntactic representations.

Session B--East Balcony

Gesture and the development of visuo-spatial skills in ASL as a second language

*Pilar Piñar, Dennis Galvan and Susan Mather
Gallaudet University*

The purpose of this study is: 1) to identify predictors for ASL L2-learning, focusing on pre-existing gestural ability, and 2) to track early ASL skill development.

Subjects were videotaped retelling ten cartoon clips in English. Nine months into learning ASL, they were videotaped retelling the same stimuli in ASL. For each subject's co-speech gesture and subsequent ASL production, we coded the following variables: 1) For role shift: a) eye gaze matches entity's eye gaze; b) facial expression matches character's emotion; c) body part movement matches character's performance. 2) For classifiers: a) handshape and palm orientation are plausible (for gesture)/correct (for ASL), b) ability to use two simultaneous handshapes. 3) For location: a) correct locations, b) location consistency, c) ability to establish two simultaneous locations. We report which measures correlated with each other 1) from gesture (transfer) to ASL, 2) within ASL, 3) within gesture.

Session C--Conference Auditorium

Young children store familiar sequences of words in memory: Evidence from imitation studies

*Colin Bannard, Max Planck Institute for Evolutionary Anthropology
Danielle Matthews, University of Manchester*

It is widely accepted that children's earliest language use consists of unanalyzed chunks of adult input reproduced as wholes. More controversial is whether such chunks play a role later in development. We will report on the first in a series of studies in which we tested children's ability to repeat frequent and infrequent four-word sequences (taken from a dense corpus of CDS). 13 high frequency sequences (e.g. *a lot of noise*) were matched with 13 low frequency sequences, which were the same except for the final word (e.g. *a lot of juice*). The final words and bigrams in matched sequences were identical in part-of-speech and frequency. Children at 2;6 and 3;6 were significantly more likely to correctly repeat frequent items, and the 3-year-olds were significantly faster when correctly repeating the first three words of frequent items. This suggests children retain and utilize memories for frequently occurring sequences of words.

Notes

Session A--Metcalf Small

Access to the full-parse route in the processing of cataphoric pronouns in a second language

*Guillermo Rodriguez
University of Pittsburgh*

Recent findings in L1 sentence processing demonstrate that Binding Principle C (Chomsky 1981) restricts the building of coreference relations during sentence parsing. Kazanina et al. (2007) used the moving window paradigm to show that English L1 readers do not attempt to establish coreference relations between a cataphoric pronoun and a disallowed antecedent. This cataphoric relationship based on configurational principles provides fertile ground to test Clahsen and Felser's Shallow Structure Hypothesis (2006), which claims that syntactic information is not utilized during L2 parsing. In this study, we assessed the parsing performance of 20 native speakers of English, 20 Spanish-speaking and 20 Chinese-speaking learners of English of intermediate to advanced proficiency with stimuli based on Kazanina et al.'s materials. Results show most learners avoided posing coreferential relationships in environments that disallow them due to Principle C, replicating the performance of the native speakers in this study and in Kazanina et al. (2007).

Session B--East Balcony

The function of children's iconic co-speech gestures: A study with French-Japanese bilinguals and French monolinguals

*Meghan Zvaigzne, Yuriko Oshima-Takane, Patricia Groleau
Kayo Nakamura and Fred Genesee
McGill University*

People gesture while speaking, but the function of co-speech gestures is debatable. Gestures may communicate information to listeners, facilitate speakers' cognitive processing, or both. This issue was addressed by examining children's speech and iconic gestures in a communication task when the listener was or was not visible. Iconic gestures convey imagistic aspects of concrete things or events. French-Japanese bilingual and French monolingual children (4;0-7;0 years) were compared to examine how knowledge of two differently structured languages influences bilinguals' gesture production. Two animations were shown differing on one feature: shape, size, manner of movement (dog rolling or sliding downhill). Children described the feature for the experimenter to identify the animation. Monolinguals gestured in both visibility conditions, though more in the visible condition. Bilinguals gestured the same amount in both conditions. These results suggest monolinguals' iconic gestures serve communicative and cognitive functions, whereas bilinguals' iconic gestures are used primarily for cognitive processing.

Notes

Session C--Conference Auditorium

Variation and facilitation in the acquisition of English yes/no questions

*Bruno Estigarribia
University of North Carolina, Chapel Hill*

English has auxiliary-less questions (*You coming?*), and declarative questions (*You're coming?*), in addition to auxiliary-initial questions (*Are you coming?*). I analyze the varying forms as facilitating paths of acquisition. Known constructions facilitate parsing and hence, comprehension of more complex unknown constructions. I propose further that children acquire yes/no questions incrementally from right to left, successively adjoining subjects and initial auxiliaries to reduced forms. The predominance of non-canonical forms in child-directed speech promotes this process. In fact, canonical auxiliary-initial questions in child-directed speech fall far short of Brown's 90% acquisition criterion. I present data from time series tests for structural changes that show parents are sensitive to their child's level of language, producing significantly more auxiliary-initial questions once their children produce them.

LUNCH SYMPOSIUM

The prosodic licensing of grammatical morphemes

*Katherine Demuth
Brown University*

Language acquisition researchers have long noted that children's production of grammatical morphemes is variable. Many have proposed that this is due to incomplete syntactic or semantic representations. However, recent research from several languages finds that the variable production of determiners and inflectional morphemes is not random, but prosodically conditioned. Thus, children are more likely to produce grammatical morphemes when these occur in prosodically simple (unmarked) contexts (e.g., as part of a foot or simple syllable structure). This suggests that some of the variability in the production of grammatical morphemes may be due to incomplete phonological/prosodic representations, and that children's syntactic/semantic representation of grammatical morphemes may be more advanced than often assumed. Similar findings have been reported for L2 acquisition. This raises important theoretical and methodological issues for studying the acquisition of syntax. It also begins to reduce the perception-production gap, raising many questions about the implications for language processing.

LUNCH SYMPOSIUM

Looking while listening: What real-time processing measures reveal about how children and adults use grammatical morphemes in understanding

*Anne Fernald
Stanford University*

Developing fluency in understanding requires learning to interpret speech from moment-to-moment, and different languages provide listeners with different cues to meaning as words and sentences unfold in time. For example, Spanish offers richer morphological information in the form of gender- and number-marking, compared to English. Using high-resolution measures of gaze patterns in response to speech, we explore how children and adults exploit language-specific morphosyntactic information in establishing reference. Young children learning Spanish as L1 can make immediate use of determiners marked for grammatical gender to identify the appropriate referent before it is named (Lew-Williams & Fernald 2007). In contrast, English-speaking adults learning Spanish as L2 may respond more rapidly overall to the object name, but the gender-marked article does not give them any processing advantage. Here we present new cross-linguistic research exploring how English- and Spanish-learning children and fluent adults use morphosyntactic cues to number in on-line comprehension.

LUNCH SYMPOSIUM

When and how the brain learns to use L2 grammatical morphemes

*Lee Osterhout
University of Washington*

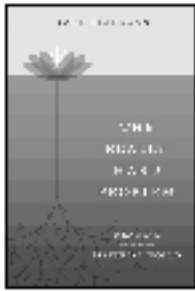
When subjects read sentences in their native language, syntactic and semantic anomalies elicit distinct event-related potential (ERP) effects (P600 and N400, respectively). In two studies, we recorded ERPs from students progressing through their first year of L2 instruction. ERPs were collected from each learner in three different sessions as the learner read L2 sentences, some of which contained morphosyntactic errors. Our questions: How much instruction is needed for the errors to elicit an ERP response? How soon do the ERP anomaly responses look "native-like"? What factors influence the rate of learning? Our results show that learners' brains detected some types of errors after minimal instruction; the rate of learning was affected by regularity and L1-L2 similarity; and some errors elicit an N400 effect early in learning and a P600 effect after additional instruction. This developmental discontinuity might reflect the transition from rote memorization to grammaticalization of a particular morphosyntactic rule.

LUNCH SYMPOSIUM

What do language learners know about grammatical morphemes?

*Virginia Valian
Hunter College and CUNY Graduate Center*

The papers in this symposium raise a number of important questions, such as: what are the behavioral and brain differences in how first and second language learners approach the acquisition of grammatical morphemes?; to what extent is a learner's morphosyntactic knowledge masked by incomplete representations at other levels?; does continuity characterize development for either first or second language learners? This discussion focuses on the issue of continuity. For first language acquisition, from infancy through age 3, I will conclude that determiners, investigated by Demuth and Fernald, provide good evidence for step-by-step continuity. If determiners are representative of other grammatical morphemes, continuity in first language acquisition has a solid empirical basis. For adult second language acquisition, I will conclude that although continuity is more difficult to detect both behaviorally and neurally, as shown by Osterhout, genuine continuity may be masked by non-linguistic strategies.



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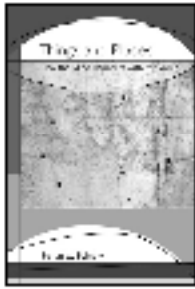
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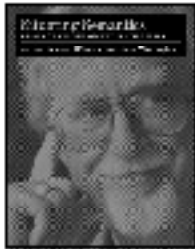
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Session A--Metcalf Small

ERP-evidence for delayed gap-filling in SLI

*Arild Hestvik, Baila Tropper
Richard G. Schwartz and Valerie Shafer
City University, New York*

13 children with specific language impairment (SLI) and 17 typically developing children (M=10.3 years) listened to sentences with ungrammatically filled gaps (a) and control sentences (b); each trial was followed by a comprehension question:

- (a) **The zebra that the hippo kissed the camel on the nose ran far away.*
- (b) *The weekend that the hippo kissed the camel on the nose he ran far away.*

The SLI children had significantly poorer comprehension, but there was no interaction between group and question type (object, subject, yes-no question). ERPs were time-locked to *the camel*. The control group exhibited an eLAN about 115ms after the filled gap. SLI children exhibited a later ERP response, characterized by an anterior positivity and posterior negativity during the 400-900ms time region following *the camel*. This shows that the SLI parser detects the ungrammaticality (and therefore has knowledge of gap-filling), but is significantly slower in computing it.

Session B--East Balcony

Moving beyond the number and animacy of arguments: Children show online evidence for mapping semantic roles to syntactic positions

*Malathi Thothathiri and Jesse Snedeker
Harvard University*

Most research to-date has investigated young children's grammatical knowledge by testing generalization to novel verbs. But this paradigm places children in unnatural situations; meanings of verbs are hard to learn; and the results do not necessarily elucidate how children process known verbs. We combined structural priming and eye-tracking to investigate children's on-line comprehension of known verbs in a naturalistic task. Does a syntactic structure with one verb influence children's interpretation of subsequent sentences with other verbs? By varying the syntactic and semantic overlap between prime and target sentences, we determined that 4-year-olds expect verb-general mappings between semantic roles and syntactic positions (*load the truck with the hay* primes *pass the monkey the hat*; *load the hay on the truck* primes *pass the money to the bear*). Studies under way ask whether 2-year-olds employ similar generalizations. This is a promising approach for studying the nature and ontogeny of children's generalizations.

Session C--Conference Auditorium

Acquiring rhythm: A comparison of L1 and L2 speakers of English and Japanese

*Izabelle Grenon, University of Victoria
Lawrence White, University of Bristol*

This study uses acoustic-phonetic measurements of speech rhythm (e.g., Grabe & Low 2002; Ramus et al. 1999; White & Mattys 2007) to explore the impact of first language (L1) rhythm on second language (L2) production. We evaluate the acquisition of English rhythm by native Japanese speakers, and the acquisition of Japanese rhythm by native English speakers, focusing on the proportion of vocalic interval (%V), duration variability of vocalic intervals (VarcoV), and variation in consonantal interval duration (rPVI_C). These metrics indicate that the variation in consonantal intervals in Japanese is most problematic for English speakers, whereas the variation in vocalic intervals is more difficult for Japanese learners of English. We discuss the nature of the interaction between L1 and L2 production of speech rhythm in English and Japanese.

Notes

Session A--Metcalf Small

Association of FOXP2 genetic markers with procedural learning and language

*J. Bruce Tomblin and Jonathan Bjork, University of Iowa
Morten H. Christiansen, Cornell University*

FOXP2 is a gene that has been implicated with speech and language impairment and also with procedural learning. We have recently shown that learning on a procedural learning task, specifically a serial response task (SRT), is associated with language achievement. This study examined the association of learning rates during a SRT with allelic variation among SNP markers on FOXP2. The participants were 123 8th-grade adolescents. The stimuli were sequences of images appearing in one of 4 horizontally arranged boxes. Reaction time associated with a button push corresponding to the box containing the image declined during pattern learning. A set of six single-nucleotide polymorphisms (SNPs) covering FOXP2 were genotyped for each participant. A significant association was found between SRT learning rate for two SNPs (rs1916988 and rs7785701). One other SNP (rs1005958) approached significance. Thus, FOXP2 genotypic variance is associated with individual differences in procedural learning as measured by the SRT task.

Session B--East Balcony

Young German children's early syntactic competence: A preferential-looking study

*Miriam Dittmar, Zurich University
Elena Lieven and Michael Tomasello,
Max Planck Institute for Evolutionary Anthropology*

Using a preferential-looking methodology with novel verbs, Gertner et al. (2006) found that 21-month-old English children understand the syntactic marking of transitive word order in an abstract, verb-general way. In the current study we tested whether German children of the same age show this same abstract understanding and whether they also display abstract syntactic knowledge when an initial practice phase is left out. We tested 48 21-month-olds in two between-subjects conditions (with [TRAINING] and without [NO-TRAINING] an initial practice phase). Only the group of TRAINING-children performed above chance in the novel verb test trials; the NO-TRAINING-children did not. These findings suggest that the children did not come to the experiment with abstract syntactic knowledge of the type needed to succeed in the test, but rather they had to go through some kind of learning period in which they had some additional linguistic experiences that prepared them for the test.

Notes

Session C--Conference Auditorium

Phonological acquisition in bilingual Spanish-English speaking children

*Leah Fabiano, University of California, San Diego
Brian Goldstein, Temple University*

The purpose of this study was to determine how interaction contributes to phonological acquisition in bilingual Spanish-English speaking children. Twenty-four typically-developing children, ages 3;0 to 4;0 were included in this study: eight bilingual Spanish-English speaking children; eight monolingual Spanish speakers, and eight monolingual English speakers. Single word samples were obtained for each child. Interaction in bilingual phonological acquisition was measured through (1) Transfer: The frequency and types of phonological cross-linguistic effects; (2) Deceleration: Slower rate of acquisition for bilinguals as compared to monolinguals, and (3) Acceleration: Faster rate of acquisition for bilinguals (Paradis & Genesee 1996). Cross-linguistic effects were evident, differences were found in accuracy between monolinguals and bilinguals, differing developmental trajectories were found across bilingual children's two languages, and sound complexity did not affect differential accuracy of sounds common and unique to Spanish and English. The results of this study indicate interaction between bilingual children's two phonologies.

Session A--Metcalf Small

Prenatal glucocorticosteroids selectively impair language development

*Karin Stromswold
Rutgers University*

Prenatal exposure to excessive glucocorticosteroids (GCs) adversely affects the neural development of animals. Despite this, women who are likely to delivery prematurely are routinely given GCs because prenatal GCs decrease neonatal morbidity. Between 1994 and 2000, there was no consensus about the optimal GC dosage and, consequently, clinically similar pregnant women received different dosages. We took advantage of this to investigate the developmental impact of prenatal GCs. The study included 495 prematurely born children who received between 0 and 12 courses of GCs. For 8 out of 9 linguistic measures, the more courses of prenatal GCs a child received, the worse the child's outcome (all p's < .05). Of the 15 nonlinguistic measures, greater prenatal GCs exposure was associated with poorer outcome for one measure and better outcome for another measure. We argue that excessive prenatal GCs cause epigenetic changes that affect neuronal structures involved in language. Moreover, our study provides a novel type of evidence for the neurodevelopmental and functional modularity of language.

Session B--East Balcony

Uncovering the pattern of children's interpretation of negation and indefinites

*Sharon Unsworth and Andrea Gualmini
Utrecht University*

Previous studies on children's interpretation of indefinites in Dutch and English yield a conflicting picture. Whereas English-speaking children were reported to access surface scope interpretations for sentences that adults interpret on inverse scope interpretations, i.e. (1) (Musolino 1998), Dutch-speaking children were reported to access inverse scope interpretations for sentences that adults interpret on their surface scope interpretation, e.g. (2) (Krämer 2000, Unsworth 2005).

- (1) *The detective didn't find some guys*
- (2) *De jongen heeft een vis niet gevangen*
The boy has a fish not caught
'There is a fish the boy hasn't caught'

To date, there is no comprehensive explanation of these contrasting findings. Recent studies suggest a solution to this apparent puzzle, however. In particular, Hulseley et al.'s (2004) data from English show that the interpretation which children select is dictated by contextual factors. In this paper, we show that the same holds for child Dutch.

Session C--Conference Auditorium

Francophones and English /h/: An acoustic problem? Evidence from event-related brain potentials

*Jennifer Mah, Heather Goad and Karsten Steinbauer
McGill University*

Recent work (Brown 1997) on the relation between segmental representations and speech perception argues that novel second language (L2) segments for which learners cannot establish new contrasts are precisely those requiring phonological features absent from the first language (L1) for appropriate segmental representation. This approach, however, is potentially challenged by francophones' difficulties with English /h/ (Janda & Auger 1992; John 2006; LaCharité & Prévost 1999), as it is unclear what feature could be required that the French grammar lacks. Alternately, francophones' difficulties with /h/ may be due to this segment's acoustic properties. This paper reports on two experimental studies using event-related brain potentials (ERPs) that provide evidence against the acoustic account. The first examined perceptual abilities by eliciting the mismatch negativity (MMN) as a measure of discrimination. The second examined information stored in lexical entries through elicitation of the N400 as an indicator of semantic incongruity. The findings from these studies suggest that francophones' difficulties with /h/ are phonological, and not due to acoustic considerations.

Notes

Session A--Metcalf Small

Cascading activation across levels of representation in children's lexical processing

*Yi Ting Huang and Jesse Snedeker
Harvard University*

One hallmark of adult language processing is the incremental propagation of information across multiple levels of analysis (Dell et al. 1997). Is this fundamental architectural feature of the lexicon or an emerging ability based on linguistic experience? Yee and Sedivy (2006) demonstrated that adults instructed to select targets (logs) made increased looks to competitors (key) that were semantically related to absent phonological associates (lock). If incremental propagation is a late-developing property of lexical processing, we would expect few looks to these competitors in children. If, however, it is an inherent constraint of the processing system, we would expect these looks in children as well. We found that 5-year-olds made increased looks to competitors relative to unrelated control items. They were also more likely to make errors in their actions in the presence of competitors. Thus our findings demonstrate that children's lexical processing involves cascading activation across levels of representation.

Session B--East Balcony

Syntax and the lexicon in early omission of Spanish clitics

*Anny Castilla, Ana Perez-Leroux and Alice Eriks-Brophy
University of Toronto*

Omissions in young children are seen as emerging from computational or grammatical deficits. We investigate an alternative proposal with data from Spanish, where there are conflicting reports on whether children undergo an omission stage for direct object clitics.

We attribute early object optionality to the unrestricted availability of a default null cognate object N, as in Hale & Keyser (2002). The referential properties of N are developmentally eliminated from the grammar in a process of modular interaction that depends both on lexical development and variability in input conditions. We predict that all languages, including Spanish, will show an optionality stage, and that lexical development is associated with its resolution.

In an elicited production study of 115 Colombian children aged 2;9-5;3, we targeted obligatory contexts. Our results reveal an early optionality stage, with younger children producing 25% omissions, as well as a significant correlation, independent from age, between TVIP scores, and rates of omissions ($r = -.514 (**)$).

Notes

Session C--Conference Auditorium

Putting the emphasis on unambiguous: The feasibility of data filtering for learning English metrical phonology

*Lisa Pearl
University of California, Irvine*

The linguistic system children acquire is complex and the available data are often noisy. One solution for converging on the correct system is that the learning mechanism is biased. This bias can be constraints on the hypothesis space, instantiated as a parametric system in domains like metrical phonology (Halle & Vergnaud 1987). It can also be constraints on how children filter their data intake, such as only using data perceived as maximally informative (Pearl & Weinberg 2007; Drescher 1999; Lightfoot 1999; Fodor 1998). Yet, how feasible is learning from realistic data with either constraint type? Are there sufficient informative data for each parameter value in ambiguous, exception-filled input (Clark 1994)? I will show that it is possible to learn a metrical phonology system instantiated as 9 interactive parameters in the highly noisy dataset of English using only unambiguous data. This supports the viability of both the parametric system and the unambiguous data filter.

Session A--Metcalf Small

Developing efficiency in on-line interpretation of adjective-noun phrases: A longitudinal study from 24- to 36-months

*Kirsten Thorpe and Anne Fernald
Stanford University*

This longitudinal study extended recent cross-sectional findings addressing how children’s skill in real-time adjective-noun phrase interpretation develops, and whether it relates to broader measures of lexical development. Children were tested in a looking-while-listening procedure at 24-, 30-, and 36-months. They heard sentences combining familiar color words with nouns, e.g., *Where’s the blue car?* while viewing pairs of pictures arranged into three conditions so adjectives were either informative (*blue car/red house, blue car/red car*) or uninformative (*blue car/blue house*). At 24-months, children were unable to use adjectives incrementally to identify referents. By 36-months, children began orienting to the correct picture during informative adjectives. But, at 30-months responses were varied: some children used adjectives incrementally, others waited to respond until after the noun. On same-object trials, slower 30-month-olds demonstrated integration difficulty. Additionally, individual variation in children’s efficient responding at 30-months was correlated with vocabulary at 24-months, and success in novel adjective extension at 36-months.

Session B--East Balcony

L1 acquisition of Bulgarian object clitics:
Unique Checking Constraint or failure to mark referentiality?

*Ivan Ivanov
The University of Iowa*

This paper presents an experimental study on the acquisition of Bulgarian object clitics, thus adding to the existing data on clitic acquisition across languages, as well as introducing previously unavailable evidence on early clitic production in Bulgarian. Two major approaches to clitic omission, namely Wexler’s (2003) Unique Checking Constraint (UCC) and Schaeffer’s (2000) syntactic-pragmatic analysis were evaluated and applied to the elicited data.

It is argued that Wexler’s analysis as it stands cannot accommodate the Bulgarian experimental data. A modified version of UCC is proposed, which successfully captures the threefold optionality in obligatory clitic environments in Bulgarian – clitic omission, default clitic, and adult-like clitic production.

On the other hand, Schaeffer’s pragmatic approach, which is capable of explaining why all clitic languages are marked by a certain degree of clitic omission among 2-year-olds, cannot account for the presence of a default clitic in Bulgarian child language.

Session C--Conference Auditorium

Modeling lags of doubly marked structures with additive constraint interaction

*Adam Albright, Giorgio Magri and Jennifer Michaels
Massachusetts Institute of Technology*

Often, children acquire marked structures in some contexts before others: e.g., Dutch children acquire complex onsets in open syllables (CCV) before closed ones (CCVC) (Levelt et al. 2000). Such lags are a challenge for standard OT, since they require two markedness violations (*CC, *Coda) to be worse than either one independently. Previous solutions include constraint conjunction (Levelt et al.), contextual constraints (Jesney 2004), and linear OT (Jäger 2004). We show that none of these solutions replicates the full acquisition path. We suggest that multiple markedness violations exacerbate one another in a way that combinations of markedness and faithfulness violations do not. We capture this with a modified linear model, in which markedness and faithfulness violations are summed separately, assigning each candidate a score equal to the greater of the two sums. We present simulation results showing that the model correctly predicts the attested acquisition path. We further discuss predictions for developmental chain shifts.

Notes

PLENARY ADDRESS

Does Emergentism have a chance?

William O'Grady
University of Hawai'i at Manoa

'Emergentist' work on language acquisition is typically characterized by a commitment to two logically independent but nonetheless closely linked ideas:

(a) Grammatical phenomena are simpler than previously thought and are best understood in terms of usage-based constructions and/or pragmatic principles rather than abstract algebraic rules.

(b) The input offers more to learners than previously thought, especially when one takes into account item-based learning, contingency learning, stochastic learning, indirect negative evidence, and the presence of infrequent exemplars, among others.

My principal point is that neither of these ideas is likely to suffice, either on its own or in combination with the other, and that Emergentism should focus on developing processor-based explanations for classic poverty-of-stimulus puzzles. I will illustrate this with the help of two case studies involving phenomena that have received considerable attention in the UG-based and Emergentist literatures on language acquisition—*want* to contraction and quantifier scope in negated sentences.

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POSTER SESSION II

Mandarin-speaking 2-year-olds use simple syntactic cues in interpreting novel verbs

*Sylvia Yuan, University of Illinois
Naihsin Li and Hintat Cheung, National Taiwan University
Cynthia Fisher, University of Illinois
Shiou-Yuan Chen and Judia Lin,
Taipei Municipal University of Education
Feng-Ming Tsao, National Taiwan University*

The syntactic bootstrapping hypothesis proposes that children use syntax to learn verbs. How does syntactic bootstrapping work in languages that allow argument omission, like Mandarin-Chinese? This paper asks whether Mandarin-speaking children use the number of nouns to interpret a new verb. In two experiments, 24-month-olds watched a pair of novel events: a one-person action and a two-person action. Children heard either a novel verb in transitive sentences (“*He’s FOing him!...*”), a novel verb in intransitive sentences (“*He’s FOing!...*”), or neutral audio (“*What do you see?...*”). Children who heard transitive sentences looked longer at the two-person action than those who heard intransitive or neutral sentences, with (Exp.1) or without (Exp.2) preceding dialogues that provided information about the verb’s syntactic properties. Like their English-speaking counterparts, Mandarin-speaking 2-year-olds use the number of nouns to interpret novel verbs, suggesting the universality of the number of nouns as a cue to verb meaning.

POSTER SESSION II

Why Dutch 12-month-old infants do not use frequent frames in early categorization

*Marian Erkelens
Universiteit van Amsterdam*

Mintz (2003) proposes that very local distributional contexts of words in the input-so-called ‘frequent frames’-function as reliable cues for categories corresponding to the adult verb and noun. He shows that categories resulting from frequent frames align with English grammatical categories for over 90% and that American 12-month-olds use these frequent frames to form a verbal category. Based on Dutch input and child data, I will show that frequent frames are not generally valid as a cue to categories.

In a replication of Mintz (2003) for the input to Dutch children, I found that the frame-based categories aligned with Dutch grammatical categories for only 40%-71%. Furthermore, Dutch 12-month-olds did not use these cues in an experiment designed parallel to Mintz (2006). Even Dutch 16-month-olds did not use the cues, although there was some development towards the English pattern between the two age groups.

POSTER SESSION II

Skewed input facilitates first steps into finite complement-clause production: A case study in German

*Silke Brandt
Max-Planck-Institute for Evolutionary Anthropology*

Looking at the input of a German-speaking child, we found that some complement-taking verbs (CTVs) are mainly used in just one or two fixed matrix-clause frames and that some CTVs have a bias towards being used with verb-second, non-subordinate, complements.

The child showed a significant tendency to first use the CTVs that showed a skewed distribution, and he first produced the CTVs in the matrix-clause frames that were most frequent for these verbs in the input. Moreover, he first used the CTVs that had a bias towards being used with verb-second complements. As suggested for English (Diessel & Tomasello 2001), the matrix clauses in these early complement-clause constructions are fixed and formulaic while the complement clauses express new or foreground information. Only later did the child use less frequent CTVs in a greater variety of matrix-clause frames with verb-final, truly subordinate, complements.

Notes

POSTER SESSION II

Cross-modal integration of linguistic rules and response schemas in monolingual and bilingual infants

*Ágnes M. Kovács and Jacques Mehler
International School for Advanced Studies*

Young learners have to extract different regularities from their environment. Already infants discriminate linguistic rule-like patterns (Marcus et al. 1999). Eventually, however, such patterns have to be integrated into further constructs. In two eye-tracking studies we investigate whether preverbal infants can integrate rules of varying complexity into different response schemas that require modifying the looking behaviour. Additionally, we ask whether experience with multiple languages influences such performance. Experiment 1 shows that 7- and 12-month-old infants learn simple linguistic patterns with repeated syllables (AA), but not with different syllables (AB). In Experiment 2, infants were simultaneously exposed to two complex rules, involving either adjacent repetitions (AAB) or distant repetitions (ABA). Here, only bilinguals succeed in learning both rules, while monolinguals learn only one. Data suggests that preverbal infants use linguistic rule-like regularities for cross-modal integration. Furthermore, the findings reveal a surprisingly early effect of bilingualism resulting in more flexible learning.

POSTER SESSION II

Acquiring the mass/count distinction in Hebrew:
How does it compare with English?

*Aviya Hacoheh
Ben-Gurion University of the Negev*

We report results of an experiment exploring the mass/count distinction in Hebrew-speaking school-age children and adults. Adopting Barner & Snedeker's (2005) experimental methodology, we tested how speakers use singular/plural morphology to distinguish nouns that quantify over individuals from nouns that do not. Our results show that Hebrew-speaking adults, categorically base their judgments on number of individuals in the count condition as well as in the flexible-count and the object-mass conditions, choosing the character with the most individual items around 100%. Conversely, in the substance-mass and the flexible-mass conditions, adult speakers clearly judge the character with the overall more volume to have "more". While these results are essentially identical to B&S's English-speaking adults, surprisingly, Hebrew-speaking school-age children behave very differently from both Hebrew-speaking adults and English-speaking preschoolers. We propose that this discrepancy is due to the relative scarcity of Hebrew structures encoding the mass/count distinction, which makes acquisition more laborious.

Notes

POSTER SESSION II

Vocabulary size and fast mapping of color words

*Emily Thom and Catherine Sandhofer
University College London*

Previous research has suggested that vocabulary size may be related to the ability to fast map (e.g. Kowalski & Zimiles 2006; Sandhofer & Smith 1999; Bates, Bretherton & Snyder 1988). This current study tested this relationship using the case example of color words. Participants were 20 children, approximately 20 months of age, who had very limited color word knowledge. They were trained in two, four, or six color words over eight training sessions, then tested in their ability to learn four additional, untrained color words after only a brief exposure to the word. Results indicate that children in the two and four word conditions perform at chance levels, whereas children in the six word condition perform at levels above what is expected by chance. Additionally, children in the six word condition outperform children in the two word condition, $p < .05$. Results provide experimental evidence for the relationship between vocabulary size and fast mapping ability. Explanations for why vocabulary size affects future word learning are discussed.

POSTER SESSION II

Telling adjectives from verbs: 3- and 4-year-olds use morphological cues to interpret novel words

Lulu Song, Roberta Golinkoff, Solveig Bosse and Weiyi Ma
University of Delaware

This study examined how well young children can utilize morphological cues alone to interpret novel adjectives and verbs. Verbs and adjectives can be presented in the same frame, thereby allowing the morphological cue to do the work. Individual 3- and 4-year-olds participated in a pointing game that showed novel properties and novel actions. Children selected either an instance of the novel property after hearing, "This Starry is *blicky*" (Adjective Condition) or the novel action after, "This Starry is *blicking*" (Verb Condition). An extension trial with two Tinman animations followed. Results showed that the children could use morphology alone to select the matching animation on the mapping trials, although the extension trials were more difficult. These are among the first data to indicate that children can use adjectival and verb morphology alone to categorize novel words when other sources of information are ambiguous.

POSTER SESSION II

Beginner & intermediate Japanese learners of English: Can they acquire the abstract feature 'Determiner Phrase Boundedness'?

Keiko Kaku and Juana M. Liceras, University of Ottawa
Nina Kazanina, University of Bristol

In English, accomplishment predicates with bounded objects, e.g., *John erased the star(s)* entail event completion (Verkuyl 1993). However, due to the absence of an overt determiner system, Japanese equivalents, e.g., *John-ga hoshi-o keshita* 'John erased the star(s)' are aspectually ambiguous; past perfectives do not entail event completion. Thus, to derive the telicity of English accomplishment predicates, Japanese learners of English need to invalidate the atelic reading when event objects are bounded.

Four study groups, L1 English, L1 Japanese and L2 English (beginner & intermediate levels), participated in a morphological and a truth-value judgment task which tested the participants' interpretation of accomplishment predicates with respect to their telicity through measurement of morphological knowledge of determiner/number categories in noun phrases.

We claim that learners use a universal mechanism for calculating telicity and the application of this semantic mechanism does not correlate with the acquisition of morphological reflexes of boundedness.

POSTER SESSION II

How do children interpret only sentences?
Evidence from German

Anja Müller, Humboldt University
Petra Schulz, Johann Wolfgang Goethe University
Barbara Hoehle, University of Potsdam

This study investigated how 6-year old German children interpret sentences with the focus particle (FP) *nur* ('only') using different experimental techniques. Our first experiment with a picture matching task replicates findings by Paterson et al. (2003) that learners up to 6 years ignore the information given by the FP. However, in a further experiment, using the truth-value-judgement task, children's performance improved when they did not have to decide between pictures representing alternative interpretations of the FP-sentence. In a third experiment the children showed an adult-like comprehension of FP-sentences when the FP was licensed by an adequate verbal context.

The present study shows that task related factors contribute to children's performance in understanding sentences with the FP *only*. Children's performance is enhanced when the experimental design provides licensing conditions for a felicitous use of the FP. Thus, our findings suggest that children have the semantic and pragmatic competencies to interpret FP-sentences.

Notes

Horizontal lines for notes

POSTER SESSION II

Acquisition of Japanese wh-questions: The effects of processing strategies on L2 sentence judgment

Mai Kumagami
Kyushu University

The present study investigates how L1-Korean/L2-Japanese, and L1-Chinese/L2-Japanese learners perform with regard to Japanese wh-questions. L2 learners of Japanese have been said to resolve scopally ambiguous question fragments in a manner similar to native speakers; they use the processing strategy that requires shorter dependency between a wh-phrase and a question morpheme *-ka* (Lieberman et al. 2006). In this study, two experiments, testing both unambiguous and ambiguous sentences, were conducted to investigate (i) whether the learners can distinguish the difference between a yes/no-question and a wh-question, and (ii) what processing strategy affects L2 sentence judgment. We have demonstrated that (a) the learners distinguish the differences between two types of Japanese questions in the unambiguous cases, obeying the wh-island constraint, and that (b) not only the strategy to require shorter dependency but also the strategy related to scrambling affect the acceptability judgment of Japanese wh-questions.

POSTER SESSION II

The role of contextual factors in scope interpretation by Korean-speaking children:
The case of numeral quantifiers and negation

Hye-Young Kwak
University of Hawai'i at Manoa

Kwak (2007) found that Korean-speaking children have a strong preference for the quantifier wide scope reading in sentences such as *Dora-ka cokay-lul twu-kay an cwu-wess-e*, 'Dora didn't pick up two seashells.' (For adults, these sentences can mean either 'there are two seashells that Dora didn't pick up.'—quantifier wide scope: 'two>not' reading), or 'it is not the case that Dora picked up two seashells'—negation wide scope: 'not>two' reading.) The present study uses reaction time measures to investigate whether Korean-speaking children simply lack the 'not>two' interpretation or whether they can access it under certain contextual conditions. The results suggest that Korean-speaking children can employ contextual information in their comprehension and that they can access the 'not>two' interpretation like adults when certain contextual conditions are satisfied, as reported for other languages by Gualmini 2004; Miller & Schmitt 2003; and Musolino & Lidz 2006; among others. Furthermore, the study shows that the contextual information may mitigate processing difficulties in children's scope ambiguity resolution.

Notes

POSTER SESSION II

Object clitics and definite articles in Greek pre-school children with Specific Language Impairment (SLI):
Implications for grammatical and processing accounts

Nafsika Smith, Susan Edwards and Vesna Stojanovik,
University of Reading
Spyridoula Varlokosta, University of the Aegean

We examined the production of pre-verbal object clitic pronouns and definite articles in nine Greek-speaking children with SLI, in order to test claims of significant impairment of these structures in Greek SLI, and to evaluate grammatical and processing accounts of SLI. The SLI group was compared to a chronological age-matched (CA) and a language-matched (LA) typically-developing group, on picture-based elicitation tasks. Subject-verb agreement and past tense were also assessed. The SLI group scored significantly below both groups on object clitics but only below the CA on definite articles (errors consisted of both substitutions and omissions). The findings disconfirm surface processing accounts (Leonard 1989) and grammatical accounts (Tsimpili & Stavrakaki 1999) claiming that both structures should be equally impaired and mainly omitted. Grammatical accounts that predict differences in performance between the two structures in other languages (e.g. Agreement/Tense Omission Model, Wexler 2003; Computational Complexity Hypothesis, Jakobowicz to appear) are considered.

POSTER SESSION II

Childrens' understanding of partially mapped number words

*Becky H. Huang, University College London
Peggy Li, Harvard University*

Research on number word acquisition shows a consistent developmental pattern: children first learn the meaning of "one." Months later, they learn "two," then "three," and finally the meanings of the other number words through inducing how counting implements the successor function. Replicating and extending existing research, we examined Mandarin-speaking children's understanding of the unmapped number words prior to induction. Our findings show children have some understanding these words refer to specific numerosities. When an object was added or subtracted, children knew a different number word should apply to the set (Exp. 1). However, they failed to use 1-to-1 correspondence between two sets to determine whether the same number word could apply to the second set. (Exp. 2). Finally, children did not understand ordinal relations. When given two sets and two number words, they did not apply the smaller number to the smaller set and larger number to the larger set (Exp. 3).

POSTER SESSION II

Underspecification and default agreement in L2 German nominals

*Darren S. Tanner
University of Washington, Seattle*

This poster considers new data from a case study of an L1 English speaker of L2 German in terms of the Missing Surface Inflection Hypothesis (MSIH). The speaker, despite long-term immersion and significant formal training in German, shows only 54% target-like use of nominal inflectional morphology in spontaneous production; however, his errors are far from random. Consistent with previous research on L2 morphosyntax, the speaker uses a default gender, which in this case has the surface form of feminine singular agreement. I argue that the current data support the MSIH in that incorrect (default) agreement is less specified for features with respect to the proper forms. I also conclude that the fusional nature of German nominal morphology has led the speaker to use a default gender paradigm which is not only underspecified for the relevant gender features, but also for number and case features as well.

POSTER SESSION II

German determiner presuppositions in first language acquisition

*Kazuko Yatsushiro
Humboldt University*

Three components of determiner meaning have been identified: truth conditions, implicatures, and presuppositions. In this paper, I investigate children's understanding of presuppositions associated with *jeder* 'every' and *beide* 'both' in German, using Presupposition Judgment Task (30 children each of ages 6, 7, 8, and 9). Heim (1991) proposes that there are two types of presuppositions, lexical and implicated. Implicated presuppositions are derived like implicatures. The result of the experiment shows that the lexical presuppositions of *jeder* (existence presupposition) is acquired much earlier than the implicated presupposition of *jeder* (anti-uniqueness presupposition). This is expected: Heim (1991) proposes that implicated presuppositions are derived, using the same mechanism as implicatures, and previous research on implicatures show that children have difficulties with implicatures (Noveck 2001), predicting that children have difficulties with implicated presuppositions as well. Children had difficulties with duality presupposition of *beide* 'both', however, although it is a lexical presupposition.

Notes

POSTER SESSION II

What's in a prime? Separate contributions of words and pictures in a lexical priming task for infants

*Suzy Styles and Kim Plunkett
University of Oxford*

When do infants develop an adult-like lexicon, with an interconnected structure? In Primed Preferential Looking, a picture is labelled shortly before dual image presentation. The target word is preceded by a 'prime,' and prime-to-target relationships are manipulated. In the current study, both prime word and target word were manipulated (Prime: related, unrelated; Target: label, no-label), allowing the independent contributions of 'naming' and 'priming' to be observed. 72 infants at 18-, 24-, and 30-months-of-age participated. In 12 trials, each infant saw both priming and both target conditions, with no stimulus repetition. Eye movements were recorded, and coded off-line, frame-by-frame. Across all age groups, effects of both 'naming' and 'priming' were evident. Detailed analysis of the time-course provides support for a primed lexical processing account.

POSTER SESSION II

Bridging inferences in high functioning-autism:
A reading time study comparing mentalistic versus non-mentalistic inferences

*Aparna Nadig, McGill University
Sally Ozonoff, University of California, Davis
and M.I.N.D. Institute*

During discourse processing we use real-world knowledge to make causal, "bridging" inferences about the outcome of an event. Individuals with autism spectrum disorders often display poor text comprehension relative to reading ability (Nation et al. 2006), raising the possibility that they have difficulty integrating propositions by making bridging inferences. We compared the performance of 8- to 14-year-olds with high-functioning autism (HFA) to that of matched typically-developing participants, in a bridging inference task using short event scenarios with either mentalistic or non-mentalistic content. Of particular interest was whether the HFA group would demonstrate specific or increased difficulty with mentalistic inferences. Results demonstrate that participants with HFA take longer than the control group to establish bridging inferences in both conditions. However, there was no indication of specific or increased difficulty with the mentalistic items for the HFA group, who pattern like the control group in terms of selecting an appropriate bridging inference.

POSTER SESSION II

Interpreting attributive adjectives in English and Spanish:
Effects of sequential processing on children's comprehension

*Adriana Weisleder, Kirsten Thorpe and Nereyda Hurtado
Stanford University*

This study investigates 3-5-year-old English- and Spanish-learning children's interpretation of attributive adjective phrases. These are challenging to interpret because listeners must integrate the noun and adjective to identify the referent, identifying the object category (e.g., balloons), and then a subset of this category possessing the designated property (e.g., red balloons) (Ninio 2004). In English, adjectives frequently precede the noun, while in Spanish they follow the noun. Here we ask whether language-specific differences in the sequential order of noun phrases containing adjectives modulate the difficulty of the integration process. English-learning children (n=20), who had to wait until after hearing the noun to integrate the adjective, performed relatively worse on this task than did Spanish-learning children (n=19), who could interpret the NP sequentially. This finding informs theories of sentence processing, suggesting that the challenge of noun-adjective integration is influenced by the order in which these words are encountered.

Notes

POSTER SESSION II

Learning novel nouns in Spanish: Differences between L1- and L2-speakers in on-line processing of grammatical gender

*Casey Lew-Williams
Stanford University*

In gender-marking languages, learners must associate novel nouns with appropriate gender-marked articles. Previous research shows that L1 Spanish-speakers, but not L2-learners, use articles to rapidly identify familiar objects. These groups had different frequency of exposure to familiar article-noun sequences. In an eye-tracking procedure, L1-speakers and L2-learners were exposed to novel noun-referent pairings. Only indefinite articles were used on teaching trials, while definite articles were used on test trials. Participants viewed novel objects with names of either the same or different gender and heard a sentence referring to one object. L1-speakers responded faster on different-gender trials, where the article was informative as a cue to the subsequent noun, than on same-gender trials, despite never hearing the co-occurrence of the definite article and novel noun. L2-learners were slower than L1-speakers and did not take advantage of articles to expedite novel referent identification. Various explanations of this L1-L2 processing difference will be discussed.

POSTER SESSION II

Incrementality, predictability, and the use of traces in L2 Japanese processing

*Mari Miyao
University of Hawai'i*

This study investigates L2 learners' abilities to process L2 sentences incrementally, to predict what element comes next, and to reactivate displaced elements at their traces in on-line parsing, in order to address the Shallow Structure Hypothesis (Clahsen & Felser 2006). Following Aoshima, Phillips, and Weinberg (2004), we examined the processing of Japanese scrambling sentences (1) in which the main-clause wh-phrase is extracted, using a self-paced reading task.

(1) *Dono-onnanohito-ni Yukari-san-wa t otokonoko-ga kooende Mamoru-kun-ni isi-o nageta-to iimasita-ka?*

"To which woman did Yukari say that the boy threw a stone at Mamoru at the park?"

The reading-time data from advanced English-speaking learners of Japanese and native-Japanese controls indicate that the L2 learners, like the natives, tend to interpret the scrambled wh-phrase in the embedded clause by using the processing mechanisms above. The results did not seem to support Clahsen and Felser's hypothesis.

Notes

POSTER SESSION II

English learners and academic vocabulary development: What works and what predicts growth?

*Dianna Townsend, University of Nevada, Reno
Penny Collins, University of California, Irvine*

The goal of this experimental intervention study was to determine if evidence-based instructional strategies for general vocabulary words are effective with middle school English learner (EL) students and academic vocabulary words. The results suggest that this is the case. Participants showed more growth during the treatment condition than when they were in the control condition, $F(1,35)=6.09, p<.05$. Additionally, delayed post-testing results for group A showed significant growth on general vocabulary, $t(19)=2.61, p<.05$. A secondary goal of this study was to examine the predictive utility of language skill variables for growth in the intervention. Participants' growth during the control period had the most predictive utility, $R^2=.40, p<.001$, for their growth during the intervention. However, the relationship was negative, $\beta=-.633, p<.001$, which suggests that students who made less growth in the absence of the intervention made more growth during the intervention. Implications for instruction, policy, and future research are presented.

POSTER SESSION II

A theoretical account for the undergeneration and overgeneration in Japanese complex predicates

*Chisato Fuji, Tomoko Hashimoto and Keiko Murasugi
Nanzan University*

Discussing Japanese-speaking children's erroneous verbs and *-sase* causatives, Murasugi and Hashimoto (2004) proposes that the children have difficulty in assigning appropriate phonetic contents to the functional head small *v*'s associated with the features [Å}cause], and the "Verb-Functional Head" (See also Murasugi, Hashimoto & Fuji (2007)). Just as in causatives, they make some errors in potentials and passives. For example, some children omit the potential suffix *-rare*, intending to express potential meaning: "*tabe-ru*" instead of "*tabe-rare-ru*" ('I can eat'). Some children overgenerate the potential suffixes *-rare* as well as *-e*: "*mot-e-rare-ta*" instead of "*mot-e-ta*" ('I could hold it'). This paper discusses that given Murasugi and Hashimoto's (2004) *v*-VP shell analysis of causative *-sase* complex predicates, the omission and the overgeneration phenomena observed in the intermediate acquisition stage of potential *-rare* complex predicates and passives can also be empirically and theoretically explained in a uniform way.

Notes

POSTER SESSION II

A case of crosslinguistic influence at the syntax/pragmatics interface in Russian-English bilingual children

*Tatiana Magnitskaia
Tufis University*

This study investigates crosslinguistic influence at the syntax/pragmatics interface in six Russian-English bilingual children, aged 7;3-11;9. Serratrice et al.'s (2004) extension to Müller and Hulk's (2001) hypothesis predicts that in older bilingual children crosslinguistic influence will reveal itself in pragmatic errors. The study focuses on the realization of overt vs. null subjects in responses to yes/no questions in Russian and English using elicited production methodology. Russian allows subjects to be dropped in certain pragmatically motivated circumstances.

The results show that the bilingual children overused overt subjects in Russian. In contrast to monolingual controls who omitted subjects in 100% of the time, the bilingual children omitted subjects only in 28.47 %, but did not drop subjects in the corresponding environment in English. Thus, crosslinguistic influence in older bilinguals is shown to go unidirectionally from the language with fewer pragmatic constraints (English) to the language with more complex constraints (Russian).

Notes

Session A--Metcalf Small

The processing role of the article choice parameter:
Evidence from L2 learners of English

Lucy Kyoungsook Kim, University of Southern California
Usha Lakshmanan, Southern Illinois University, Carbondale

Based on production data, Ionin et al. (2004) reported that Korean and Russian L2 learners of English, whose L1s lack articles, fluctuated between the two settings of the Article-Choice-Parameter, viz., Specificity/Definiteness. When learners distinguished articles on the basis of specificity (as in Samoan), they used *the* (instead of *a*) with specific indefinites. When they distinguished articles based on definiteness (as in English), they used *a* with specific indefinites. We report the results of a study that investigated the processing role of the Article-Choice-Parameter through a context-embedded, on-line and an off-line experiment. Eighteen Intermediate and Advanced Korean L2 learners of English and fourteen native-English controls completed a word-by-word, self-paced moving-window reading task and an off-line semantic acceptability-rating task. The on-line task results indicated that only the intermediate learners adhered to the specificity setting. The off-line task results indicated the intermediate learners fluctuated between the two settings but that the advanced learners adhered to the definiteness setting.

Session B--East Balcony

Maximal trouble in free relatives

Nadya Modyanova and Ken Wexler
Massachusetts Institute of Technology

This study investigates typical children's knowledge of the maximality presupposition in free relative (FR) clauses: "[FR *What is on the table*] *is red*". In a picture match/mismatch task, one experimental condition constituted a violation of maximality: a picture showing some blue and some red balloons was paired with a test sentence that (incorrectly) described only a part of that set. Young children (3- to 5-years-old) and older children (6-9 years) showed deficits in correctly rejecting violations of maximality: 16% and 40% respectively. It is likely that while younger children do not know the maximality presupposition, the older children do not know how to react to a presupposition failure and thus accept it, indicating its still underdeveloped state. These findings support the hypothesis that children have difficulty with the maximality presupposition in plural sets, as predicted by Wexler (2005), and do not appear to be consistent with conclusions of Munn et al. (2006).

Session C--Conference Auditorium

Influence of prosody on the production of determiners and adjectives in two years old children's sentences

Roseline Frechette and Marie Labelle
University of Quebec

Nine French-speaking children of 1;11 to 2;7 were asked to repeat 54 four to five word sentences of the form "Pronoun V NP" with three conditions: a) det + monosyllabic noun; b) det + bisyllabic noun; c) det + monosyllabic adjective + monosyllabic noun. If language-specific prosodic structures play a role in acquisition, early determiners in a iambic language like French should be licensed by the stress pattern of the following noun. The results show 1) more determiner omission in condition b than in a; 2) more determiner omission in c than in b. The difference between conditions a & b suggests that children's productions are constrained by the prosodic foot; for condition c, the fact that children do not attach the determiner to the adjective to form a binary foot suggests that the higher level of structure introduced by the adjective plays a role in functional word production.

Notes

Session A--Metcalf Small

Colliding cues in word segmentation:
The role of cue strength and individual differences

Daniel Weiss, Chip Gerfen and Aaron Mitchel
Pennsylvania State University

The process of word segmentation is adaptive, with many strategies potentially available to learners. We explored how segmentation cues interact, and whether successful resolution of cue competitions may be related to general executive functioning. Adult participants listened to artificial speech streams that contained both statistical and pause-defined cues to word boundaries. When these cues “collided” (indicating different locations for word boundaries), cue strength appeared to dictate the predominant parsing strategy. However, when cues were relatively equal in strength, the ability to consistently deploy a segmentation strategy significantly correlated with stronger performance on the Simon Task, a non-linguistic cognitive task typically thought to involve executive processes such as inhibitory control and selective attention. Our results extend our understanding of speech segmentation by demonstrating that cue strength alone can modulate segmentation strategies and that general information processing strategies may play a role in solving one of the early challenges for language learners.

Session B--East Balcony

Freedom of scope and conservatism in the development of Japanese

Takuyo Goro, Tohoku University
Annie Gagliardi and Akira Omaki,
University of Maryland, College Park
Natsuko Katsura and Shin-Ichi Tamura, Tohoku University
Noriaki Yusa, Miyagi Gakuin Women's University
Colin Phillips, University of Maryland, College Park

Japanese is often described as a ‘scope rigid’ language, based on the observation that sentences containing two quantifiers are scopally unambiguous, unlike their English counterparts. This paper examines the development of the language-specific constraint on scope interpretation, and reports results from experiments that show that Japanese preschoolers allow non-surface scope interpretations that Japanese adults disallow. The scope freedom is observed with both canonical and scrambled word orders, and with different quantifiers. Together, these findings clearly demonstrate that children do not learn the language-specific scope constraint through some form of conservative learning. Consequently, these findings call for a non-conservative learning mechanism that allows children to purge non-adult scope interpretations solely based on positive evidence.

Session C--Conference Auditorium

The acquisition of noun-class marking in Xhosa:
Early sensitivity to form and function

Sandile Gxilishe, University of Cape Town
Claire Denton-Spalding and Peter de Villiers, Smith College

The South African language Xhosa is rich in agreement marking, with 15 noun classes each with its own obligatory prefix and/or pre-prefix. Noun class prefixes have traditionally been treated as uni-functional morphological elements, monosyllabic or disyllabic in form. But recent linguistic accounts of adult Xhosa propose that there are separate pre-prefixes and prefixes, each with a different syntactic and semantic function. This paper investigates the acquisition of these forms by 1 to 3-year-old monolingual native-speakers of Xhosa in longitudinal language samples. Pre-prefix and prefix forms showed closely parallel acquisition, rising from 10% correct at 12-18m to over 70% correct at 36-39m, but we present evidence that they are independently acquired. By age 3 the children showed sensitivity to the functional difference between the pre-prefix and prefix. The results support the linguistic analysis of the pre-prefix as a definiteness marker and the prefix as a noun class marker like grammatical gender.

Notes

Session A--Metcalf Small

Learning and hallucinating words from speech:
Statistical learning and word segmentation

*Ansgar D. Endress, Harvard University
Jacques Mehler, International School for Advanced Studies*

In fluent speech, no reliable cues signal word boundaries; learners thus have to first identify the sound stretches corresponding to words. Statistical processes, in particular “transition probabilities” (TPs), are thought to be crucial to solving this and many other problems in language acquisition.

Here we show that TP-based processes leave adult learners no more familiar with items heard 600 times than with “phantom-words” not heard at all, and more familiar with phantom-words than with frequently occurring syllable combinations. In contrast to the failure to extract words from monotonous speech, we show that minimal prosody-like perceptual cues (such as lengthening the word-final syllables) allow learners to recognize actual items.

These results challenge the standard view of the role of TPs in word learning. TPs may well signal co-occurring syllables; this, however, does not seem to lead to the extraction of word-like units. Extracting words from speech thus requires other cues as well.

Session B--East Balcony

The acquisition of evidentiality and source monitoring

*Ozge Ozturk and Anna Papafragou
University of Delaware*

This paper explores the acquisition of grammaticalized evidentiality and the development of non-linguistic source monitoring abilities. We report findings from six studies conducted with Turkish-speaking children between the ages of 5 and 7. The first three studies systematically target the full range of evidential meanings (direct vs. indirect: hearsay/inference) encoded in the Turkish past tense system and attempt to chart their developmental timetable. The last three experiments are designed to closely parallel the linguistic experiments and investigate the ability to recognize and report non-linguistic sources of knowledge in the very same children. Our results show that non-linguistic source monitoring abilities in general precede and support the acquisition of linguistic evidentiality; nevertheless, there are asymmetries within the class of evidential concepts, with direct sources of evidence being understood earlier than indirect sources. Taken together, our results support the conclusion that both conceptual and mapping factors contribute jointly to the acquisition of evidential morphology.

Notes

Session C--Conference Auditorium

The comprehension of standard American English morphology by 6- and 7-year-old speakers of African American English

*Tim Beyer, University of California, San Diego
Carla L. Hudson Kam, University of California, Berkeley*

While African American English (AAE) and Standard American English (SAE) share many features, they also contain systematic differences that could negatively impact comprehension. Here we examine how 6- and 7-year-old AAE-speakers interpret shared lexical items and morphology in comparison to SAE tense morphology that does not regularly occur in AAE (past tense *-ed*, 3rd person present *-s*, future contracted *-’ll*), as compared to their SAE-speaking peers. Experiment 1 assessed off-line performance and found that while all children interpreted shared forms, the AAE-speakers did not interpret the SAE tense morphology. The SAE-speakers generally did; however, the 6-year-olds performed at chance on *-s*. Eye-tracking measures (Experiment 2) generally confirmed the findings of Experiment 1: while all children rapidly integrated the shared forms, the AAE-speakers showed no sensitivity to the SAE tense morphology. Interestingly, the looking patterns revealed that the 6-year-old SAE-speakers are sensitive to *-s*, despite the off-line results.

Session A--Metcalf Small

Connecting cues in word segmentation

*Sarah D. Sahni, Jenny R. Saffran and Mark S. Seidenberg
University of Wisconsin-Madison*

This study examined how infants learn from speech that contains multiple consistent cues. Specifically, can infants use a known cue to discover an overlapping novel cue? We familiarized 9-month-old infants with a nonsense language that contained a known cue overlapping with a novel cue to word boundaries. During test, infants listened significantly longer to novel items that adhered to the novel cue than to items that did not, indicating that infants were able to generalize the novel cue from the nonsense language to the novel test items. These results suggest that infants can use correlated cues by bootstrapping from one cue to another. Computational research suggests that simple learning mechanisms, like those employed by infants, take advantage of complexity and redundancies to extract informative cues from messy input. Results from this study support the claim that infants are also able to capitalize on complex stimuli by exploiting redundancies.

Session B--East Balcony

Exhaustivity in clefts & questions, and the quantifier connection: A crosslinguistic study of English and German

*Tanja Heizmann
University of Massachusetts, Amherst*

Clefts and single/multiple wh-questions have an exhaustivity requirement, e.g. (1) is inappropriate if John ate a sandwich and two more items.

(1) # *It was the sandwich that John ate.*

Furthermore, exhaustivity is an inherent property of universal quantifiers like every.

This paper reports when and how 52 American and 36 German children between the ages of 3 to 5 acquire exhaustivity across these structures. The results show that exhaustivity emerges first in single questions and quantifiers, and later in multiple questions and clefts in both languages.

Multiple questions are acquired late because children are unable to connect two variables which is required to derive an adult pair list answer. Clefts are acquired late because the child does not impose exhaustivity due to confusions with minimally different structures that do not have an exhaustivity requirement, such as an existential relative structure.

Session C--Conference Auditorium

Knowing more than one can say:
The early regular plural

*Jennifer A. Zapf
University of Wisconsin-Green Bay*

This paper reports on partial knowledge in 2-year-old children's learning of the regular English plural. In Experiments 1 and 2, children were presented with one kind and its label and then were either presented with two of that same kind (A-->AA) or the initial picture next to a very different thing (A-->AB). The children in A-->AA rarely produced the plural. The children in A-->AB supplied the singular form of A but children in A-->AA did not. Experiment 3 compared the performance of English-speaking and Japanese-speaking children in A-->AA with common and novel nouns. The Japanese-speaking children (learning a language without a mandatory plural) supplied the singular form of A but the English-speaking children did not. The findings indicate young children learning English know there is a plural to be learned before they have fully worked out the rules of production or acquired the necessary singular-plural pairs for broad generalization.

Notes

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Session A--Metcalf Small

Metrical and statistical cues for word segmentation:
The use of vowel harmony and word stress as cues to word boundaries by 6- and 9-month-old Turkish learners

Anja van Kampen, University of Potsdam
Gueliz Parmaksiz, Humboldt University
Barbara Hoehle, University of Potsdam

Two studies focusing on Turkish infants' sensitivity to vowel harmony and the use of this cue for word segmentation will be reported. The first experiment compared Turkish and German 6-month-olds' sensitivity to vowel harmony between adjacent syllables within words. In a HTP-Experiment, harmonic and non-harmonic bisyllabic pseudo words with initial or final stress were presented. Turkish, but not German, infants preferred harmonic over non-harmonic stimuli, suggesting that vowel harmonic characteristics are learned within the first half year of life. A second experiment tested if missing vowel harmony between adjacent syllables and word stress serve as segmentation cues for Turkish 9-months-olds. Using harmonic bisyllabic pseudo words having final stress, and a preceding harmonic or non-harmonic context syllable which was either stressed or not stressed, we found a clear harmony effect: missing vowel harmony between the context syllable and the pseudo word facilitated the segmentation of the disyllabic.

Session B--East Balcony

Scope ambiguity without covert scope-shifting in the acquisition of English

Chizuru Nakao and Takuya Goro
University of Maryland, College Park

The relative scope of sentential negation and quantificational NPs has been extensively investigated in children (Musolino et. al. 2000; Lidz and Musolino 2002; among others). A locus of debate in this field is the availability of covert scope-shifting operations (QR, reconstruction) to preschoolers. We add a new dimension to the field by investigating surface syntactic ambiguity. We examined relative scope interpretation of negation and adverbial clauses headed by *because* (Lasnik 1975; Linebarger 1978; among many others) on English-speaking preschoolers and adults. Conducting an experiment with a truth-value judgment task, we found that both children and adults exhibit a bias to interpret *because*-clauses outside of negation. Children exhibited an adult-like bias to interpret *because*-clauses outside the scope of negation, despite the fact that negation precedes the *because*-clause. Children's adult-like behavior with these structural ambiguities suggests that their non-adult behavior with covert scope-shift cannot be attributed solely to difficulties with negation.

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Session C--Conference Auditorium

Productive comprehension of English tense/aspect morphology at 29 months

Letitia Naigles, University of Connecticut
Laura Wagner, Ohio State University
Ashley Maltempo, University of Connecticut

Tense/aspect morphemes (English “-ed” and “-ing”) are among the earliest verbal morphemes spontaneously produced; however, their use with familiar verbs does not reveal when they become productive in grammar. Using intermodal preferential looking (IPL), we investigated whether 29-month-olds can distinguish novel completed and ongoing actions based on the morphemes “-ed” vs. “-ing.”

The IPL video included three blocks (cf. Gerntner et al. 2006): a ‘priming’ block, highlighting the ongoing/completed contrast with ‘dummy’ do; a ‘familiar test’ block, contrasting ongoing/completed with different familiar verbs; and the critical ‘novel action’ block, showing children two pairs of novel actions (one completed, one ongoing) paired with novel verbs (“*She geeded it*”; “*She’s kradding it*”).

With novel verbs, children looked significantly differently at the screens depending on the morphology, preferring the completed action paired with ‘ed’, and the ongoing action paired with ‘ing’. These data suggest children generalize these morpheme’s meanings as they learn them.

Alternates

Acquisition of English (primary) stress by French Canadian L2ers: Non-target-like foot alignment

Annie Tremblay
University of Illinois, Urbana-Champaign

This study investigates whether French Canadian L2ers of English can acquire the trochaic foot and align its head with the heavy syllable in English nouns. Canadian French has an iambic foot aligned with the right edge of the Prosodic Word (PW) (1). Conversely, English has a trochaic foot sensitive to syllable weight, with the optimal foot containing two light ([LL]) (2a) or one heavy ([H]) (2b) syllable(s). Although the foot for primary stress in English is also right-aligned (2b)-(2c), stress often surfaces on the left edge of the PW, because the last syllable of nouns is extraprosodic (2d). The L2ers (and native English speakers) completed a nonsense-word production task. The results show that the L2ers acquired the trochaic foot, but aligned its head with the left edge of the PW, not with the heavy syllable. The learnability of L2 stress will be discussed from these results.

- (1) [le [[joLI]Ft]PW [[chaPEAU]Ft]PW]PP 'the pretty hat'
- (2) a. [[[MAtter]Ft]PW]PP [LL]
- b. [di[REKT]Ft]PW]PP L[H]
- c. [[i[MAGine]Ft]PW]PP L[LL]
- d. [[[CAna]Ft da]PW]PP [LL]L

Alternates

Exaggerated prosody in infant-directed speech? Intonational phonological analysis of Japanese infant-directed speech

Yosuki Igarashi, *The Japanese Society for the Promotion of Science*
Reiko Mazuka, *Duke University*

Exaggerated intonation is claimed to be a universal characteristic of infant-directed (ID) speech. However, analyses of the ID intonation are generally based on purely physical measurements of overall fundamental frequency contours without reference to the linguistic structure of intonation, and thus the understanding of ID intonation has been limited. In this study, we examine intonation of Japanese ID speech by analyzing the RIKEN Japanese Mother-Infant Conversation Corpus which provides, along with the speech signals for AD and ID speech of 22 mothers, various annotations such as segments, morphology and intonation (based on ToBI). The results reveal that differences between AD and ID speech are not observed equally through an overall contour, but localized at the specific points of the utterance, most notably at the end of intonational phrases. They are found, for example, in the distribution of categories of phrase-final boundary tones, and in phonetic modifications within each tonal category.

Alternates

Vocabulary size and fast mapping of color words

Emily Thom and Catherine Sandhofer
University College London

Previous research has suggested that vocabulary size may be related to the ability to fast map (e.g. Kowalski & Zimiles 2006; Sandhofer & Smith 1999; Bates, Bretherton & Snyder 1988). This current study tested this relationship using the case example of color words. Participants were 20 children, approximately 20 months of age, who had very limited color word knowledge. They were trained in two, four, or six color words over eight training sessions, then tested in their ability to learn four additional, untrained color words after only a brief exposure to the word. Results indicate that children in the two and four word conditions perform at chance levels, whereas children in the six word condition perform at levels above what is expected by chance. Additionally, children in the six word condition outperform children in the two word condition, $p < .05$. Results provide experimental evidence for the relationship between vocabulary size and fast mapping ability. Explanations for why vocabulary size affects future word learning are discussed.

Notes

Alternates

Beginner & intermediate Japanese learners of English:
Can they acquire the abstract feature 'Determiner Phrase
Boundedness'?

Keiko Kaku and Juana M. Liceras, University of Ottawa
Nina Kazanina, University of Bristol

In English, accomplishment predicates with bounded objects, e.g., *John erased the star(s)* entail event completion (Verkuyl 1993). However, due to the absence of an overt determiner system, Japanese equivalents, e.g., *John-ga hoshi-o keshita* 'John erased the star(s)' are aspectually ambiguous; past perfectives do not entail event completion. Thus, to derive the telicity of English accomplishment predicates, Japanese learners of English need to invalidate the atelic reading when event objects are bounded.

Four study groups, L1 English, L1 Japanese and L2 English (beginner & intermediate levels), participated in a morphological and a truth-value judgment task which tested the participants' interpretation of accomplishment predicates with respect to their telicity through measurement of morphological knowledge of determiner/number categories in noun phrases.

We claim that learners use a universal mechanism for calculating telicity and the application of this semantic mechanism does not correlate with the acquisition of morphological reflexes of boundedness.

Alternates

Phonological knowledge trumps salient local regularity
in 2-year-olds' word learning

Carolyn Quam and Daniel Swingley
University of Pennsylvania

Acquiring phonology should make some things "harder" to learn. As native-language phonology constrains interpretations of linguistic input, learning nonnative contrasts should become more difficult. In English, pitch cannot contrast words. If an English learner hears a novel word with a distinctive pitch contour, she should attribute the pitch to sentence-level--not word-level--variation. Here we show that 2-year-olds do not consider large, highly salient pitch movements to "belong" to novel words. Children were taught a new word. In teaching, the word had consistent segmental and pitch-movement characteristics. Word recognition for correct and deviant pronunciations was tested using eyetracking. Mispronunciations of vowel quality impaired recognition. But large changes in the word's pitch pattern did not affect recognition. Speech perception is not just about discrimination. It is also about interpretation of perceptible variation. By age 2, children already apply knowledge of English phonology to override local characteristics of their experience with words.

Notes

Alternates

ERP evidence for impaired processing of wh-questions in
children with SLI

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Children with specific language impairment (SLI) comprehend and produce object questions as compared to subject questions more poorly than typically developing (TD) children. We report a study that used event-related potentials (ERP) to explore the processes underlying this difference. The participants included 17 TD and 13 SLI children (mean ages=10.3; 10.1 years) and 14 adults with normal language (mean age=28). Object and subject questions based on preceding discourse were auditorily presented. ERPs in the right and left anterior regions revealed a sustained anterior positivity for object relative to subject questions in the TD group. The SLI group showed this effect in a small section of the right anterior region. Normal adults demonstrated a sustained left anterior negativity for object questions, consistent with prior evidence for adults. We interpret the sustained positivity in children as an index of syntactic working memory over the filler-gap distance in object questions and suggest that this process is deficient in SLI.

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