
Acquisition Of Word Order In Chinese As A Foreign Language Studies On Language Acquisition

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EDWARD PHELPS

Adult Second Language Learners' Acquisition in OSV Word Order with Case Markers in Korean John Benjamins Publishing

This dissertation examines the impact of the type of referring expression on the acquisition of word order variation in German-speaking preschoolers. A puzzle in the area of language acquisition concerns the production-comprehension asymmetry for non-canonical sentences like "Den Affen fängt die Kuh." ("The monkey, the cow chases."), that is, preschoolers usually have difficulties in accurately understanding non-canonical sentences approximately until age six (e.g., Dittmar et al., 2008) although they produce non-canonical sentences already around age three (e.g., Poeppel & Wexler, 1993; Weissenborn, 1990). This dissertation investigated the production and comprehension of non-canonical sentences to address this issue. Three corpus analyses were conducted to investigate the impact of givenness, topic status and the type of referring expression on word order in the spontaneous speech of two- to four-year-olds and the child-directed speech produced by their mothers. The positioning of the direct object in ditransitive sentences was examined; in particular, sentences in which the direct object occurred before or after the indirect object in the sentence-medial positions and sentences in which it occurred in the sentence-initial position. The results reveal similar ordering patterns for children and adults. Word order variation was to a large extent predictable from the type of referring expression, especially with respect to the word order involving the sentence-medial positions. Information structure (e.g., topic status) had an additional impact only on word order variation that involved the sentence-initial position. Two comprehension experiments were conducted to investigate whether the type of referring expression and topic status influences the comprehension of non-canonical transitive sentences in four- and five-year-olds. In the first experiment, the topic status of the one of the sentential arguments was established via a preceding context sentence, and in the second experiment, the type of referring expression for the sentential arguments was additionally manipulated by using either a full lexical noun phrase (NP) or a personal pronoun. The results demonstrate that children's comprehension of non-canonical sentences improved when the topic argument was realized as a personal pronoun and this improvement was independent of the grammatical role of the arguments. However, children's comprehension was not improved when the topic argument was realized as a lexical NP. In sum, the results of both production and comprehension studies support the view that referring expressions may be seen as a sentence-level cue to word order and to the information status of the sentential arguments. The results highlight the important role of the type of referring expression on the acquisition of word order variation and indicate that the production-comprehension asymmetry is

reduced when the type of referring expression is considered. --- Im Rahmen der vorliegenden Dissertation wurde der Einfluss des referierenden Ausdrucks auf den Erwerb von Wortstellungsvariationen bei deutschsprachigen Vorschulkindern untersucht. Eine zentrale Fragestellung im Spracherwerb betrifft die Asymmetrie zwischen Produktion und Verständnis. Diese Asymmetrie ist dadurch gekennzeichnet, dass sechsjährige Kinder oft Schwierigkeiten haben, Sätze in der nicht-kanonischen Wortstellung, z.B. „Den Affen fängt die Kuh.“, zu verstehen (z.B., Dittmar et al., 2008), obwohl bereits Dreijährige nicht-kanonische Sätze produzieren können (z.B., Poeppel & Wexler, 1993; Weissenborn, 1990). Um diese Asymmetrie zu untersuchen wurde in der Dissertation die Produktion und das Verständnis von nicht-kanonischen Sätzen betrachtet. In drei Korpusstudien wurde der Einfluss von Vorerwähntheit, Topikstatus und Wahl des referierenden Ausdrucks auf die Wortstellung in der Spontansprache von Zwei- bis Vierjährigen und in der kind-gerichteten Sprache ihre Mütter analysiert. Es wurde die Position des direkten Objektes in ditransitiven Sätzen untersucht, d.h., Sätze in denen das direkte Objekt vor oder nach dem indirekten Objekt in den satzmedialen Positionen stand, und Sätze in denen es in der satzinitialen Position stand. Die Ergebnisse zeigen ähnlich Abfolgemuster in der Satzproduktion der Kindern und Erwachsenen. Die Position des direkten Objektes, vor allem in den satzmedialen Positionen, war zu einem großen Teil durch die Wahl des referierenden Ausdrucks vorhersagbar. Informationsstrukturelle Faktoren (z.B. Topikstatus) hingegen beeinflussten - unabhängig vom Einfluss des referierenden Ausdrucks - nur die Wortstellung in der satzinitialen Position. Zwei Verständnisexperimente wurden durchgeführt um den Einfluss des referierenden Ausdrucks und des Topikstatus auf das Verständnis von nicht-kanonischen transitiven Sätzen zu untersuchen. Im ersten Experiment wurde der Topikstatus eines der beiden Satzargumente durch einen vorherigen Kontext modifiziert. Im zweiten Experiment wurde zusätzlich der referierende Ausdruck modifiziert, d.h. das Topik wurde entweder durch eine lexikalische Nominalphrase (NP) oder ein Personalpronomen realisiert. Die Ergebnisse zeigen, dass vier- und fünfjährige Kinder Sätze in der nichtkanonischen Wortstellung besser verstehen konnten, wenn das Topik als Personalpronomen realisiert wurde, unabhängig von der grammatischen Rolle des Topiks. Das Satzverständnis war jedoch nicht verbessert, wenn das Topik als lexikalische NP realisiert wurde. Zusammengefasst zeigen die Ergebnisse der Produktions- und Verständnisstudien, dass der referierende Ausdruck als Hinweis auf die Wortstellung und auf den Informationsstatus der Argumente des Satzes von den Kindern genutzt werden kann. Sie unterstreichen somit die Bedeutung der Wahl des referierenden Ausdrucks auf den Erwerb von Wortstellungsvariation und zeigen, dass die Asymmetrie zwischen Produktion und Verständnis an Bedeutung verliert, wenn der referierende Ausdruck einbezogen wird.

The Acquisition of Scrambling and Cliticization John Benjamins Publishing

This volume provides the most exhaustive and comprehensive treatment available of the Verb Second property, which has been a central topic in formal syntax for decades. While Verb Second

has traditionally been considered a feature primarily of the Germanic languages, this book shows that it is much more widely attested cross-linguistically than previously thought, and explores the multiple empirical, theoretical, and experimental puzzles that remain in developing an account of the phenomenon. Uniquely, formal theoretical work appears alongside studies of psycholinguistics, language production, and language acquisition. The range of languages investigated is also broader than in previous work: while novel issues are explored through the lens of the more familiar Germanic data, chapters also cover Verb Second effects in languages such as Armenian, Dinka, Tohono O'odham, and in the Celtic, Romance, and Slavonic families. The analyses have wide-ranging consequences for our understanding of the language faculty, and will be of interest to researchers and students from advanced undergraduate level upwards in the fields of syntax, historical linguistics, and language acquisition.

Acquisition of Word Order in Chinese as a Foreign Language Oxford University Press, USA

other aspects of developing grammars. And this is, indeed, what the contributions to this volume do. Parameterization of functional categories may, however, be understood in different ways, even if one shares the dual assumptions that substantive elements (verbs, nouns, etc.) are present in all grammars and that X-bar principles are part of the grammatical knowledge available to the child prior to language-specific learning processes. From these assumptions it follows that the child should, from early on, be able to construct projections on the basis of these elements. The role of functional categories, however, may still be interpreted differently. One possibility, first suggested by Radford (1986, 1990) and by Guilfoyle and Noonan (1988), is that children must discover which functional categories (FC) need to be implemented in the grammar of the language they are acquiring. Another possibility, first explored by Hyams (1986), is that a specific category is present in developing grammars but that parameter values are set in a way deviating from the target adult grammar, corresponding, however, to options realized in other adult systems. A third option would be that these categories might be specified differently in developing as opposed to mature grammars. All three are explored in the papers collected in this volume. Before outlining the various hypotheses in more detail, however, I would like briefly to sketch the grammatical context in which the following debate is situated. 2.

Word Order and Scrambling John Benjamins Publishing Company

The Acquisition of German: Introducing Organic Grammar brings together work on the acquisition of German from over four decades of child L1 and immigrant L2 learner studies. The book's major feature is new longitudinal data from three secondary school students who began an exchange year in Germany with no German knowledge and attained fluency. Their naturalistic acquisition process — with a succession of stages described for the first time in L2 acquisition — is highly similar to that of younger learners. This has important implications for German teaching and for the theory of Universal Grammar and acquisition. Organic Grammar, a variant of generative syntax, is offered as a practical alternative to Chomsky's Minimalism. The analysis focuses on extensive monthly samples of the three students' German development in an input-rich environment. Similar to previous studies, the teenagers build syntactic structure from the bottom up. Two acquired correct word order by the end of the year, the third, who had greater conscious awareness of German grammar, had a divergent route of development, suggesting that language awareness can alter a natural

developmental path. The results are addressed in light of recent debates in child-adult differences.

Universal Grammar and Focus Constraints Springer Science & Business Media

The case studies in this volume offer new insights into word order change. As is now becoming increasingly clear, word order variation rarely attracts social values in the way that phonological variants do. Instead, speakers tend to attach discourse or information-structural functions to any word order variation they encounter in their input, either in the process of first language acquisition or in situations of language or dialect contact. In second language acquisition, fine-tuning information-structural constraints appears to be the last hurdle that has to be overcome by advanced learners. The papers in this volume focus on word order phenomena in the history of English, as well as in related languages like Norwegian and Dutch-based creoles, and in Romance.

Bilingual First Language Acquisition Walter de Gruyter

Key Issues in Chinese as a Second Language Research presents and discusses research projects that serve as theoretical grounding for improving the teaching and learning of Chinese as a second language (CSL) in order to help researchers and practitioners better understand the acquisition, development, and use of CSL. With the exception of the first chapter, which is state-of-the-art, each chapter makes an attempt to bring together theory and practice by focusing on theory building and theory application in practice. The book is organized around areas where most future research is needed in CSL: phonology, semantics, grammar, and pragmatics. Consisting of contributions from an international group of scholars working on cutting-edge research, this is the ideal text for researchers, graduate students, and practitioners in the area of Chinese as a second or foreign language.

The Sun is Feminine John Benjamins Publishing

This study examined the comprehension of native speakers and English-speaking second language learners of OSV word order with case markers using a "matching sentences to movies" method. Based on the Shallow Structure Hypothesis and previous research in other free word order language, this study hypothesized that 1) Korean OSV word order might be difficult to process for beginning English L2 learners of Korean due to L1 word order (SOV) or First Noun Principle. 2) Intermediate English -- speaking L2 learners of Korean will use case markers as cues to identify grammatical relations in sentence comprehension as well as native speakers regardless of the L1 similarity (L1 word order and presence/absence of case markers). Ten native speakers, ten English beginning-level learners, and ten English intermediate-level learners participated in the study. The test sentence types were 1) SOV word order with subject and object markers, 2) SOV word order with subject markers, 3) OSV word order with subject and object markers, and 4) OSV word order with subject markers. The result demonstrated that intermediate L2 learners were able to comprehend OSV word order with case markers similar to those used by native speakers when they identify agent/patient roles in Korean. These findings indicate that 1) English L2 learners are able to understand OSV word order with case markers using native-like processing strategy (use of case markers as cues) regardless of their L1, and 2) Native-like comprehension of OSV with case markers is attainable with intermediate proficiency.

Impact of the type of referring expression on the acquisition of word order variation Waxmann Verlag GmbH

The papers comprising this volume focus on a broad range of acquisition phenomena (subject dislocation, structural case, word order, determiners, pronouns, quantifiers and logical words) from different languages and language combinations. These include languages with large numbers of speakers (French, German, Spanish) and less frequently spoken ones (Norwegian, Russian, Swiss-German, Hebrew, Basque and Serbo-Croatian) within different language acquisition scenarios and a wide range of populations. Most contributions adopt a common theoretical background within the generative approach with the aim to advance, discuss and critically analyse other research on first, bilingual and language impaired acquisition. The various sections of this stimulating volume reflect different theoretical and methodological perspectives of current research investigating morphology and syntax and offer diverging interpretations.

Key Issues in Chinese as a Second Language Research John Benjamins Publishing

How children acquire competence in verb placement in languages in which verb placement in matrix clauses does not coincide with that in embedded clauses is not well understood. Verb-Second languages like German and Dutch display the verb-final pattern in embedded clauses, which can be confusing for a developing child. This book addresses this problem in the context of Swiss German, itself a Germanic dialect. Numerous examples are given of natural language produced by two children who were consistently followed between the ages of 4 and 6. Unexpectedly, since previous literature has suggested that children master verb placement very early in their linguistic development, these children move the verb in any type of embedded clause, leading to many verb-placement errors. After introducing the problem and describing the data in detail, a technical analysis is developed in terms of a minimally split-CP, which is rather successful in accounting for these data. The book should interest advanced students and researchers in both language acquisition and syntax.

RlyThe Role of Maternal Input in Early Word Order Acquisition Universitätsverlag Potsdam
How and why do all children learn language? Why do some have difficulties while others are early language learners? What are the consequences of early bilingualism? Is it possible to reach native-like competence in a foreign language? Although we still cannot fully answer these questions, research during the last two decades has begun to solve some pieces of the puzzle. This book proposes an interdisciplinary collection of writings from some of the best specialists across several fields in cognitive science, offering a wide sample of recent advances in the study of first language acquisition, bilingualism, second language acquisition, and disorders of oral language. It is addressed to all researchers and students interested in language acquisition, as well as to teachers, clinicians and parents, who will find therein many new findings and varied methodological approaches, as well as challenging questions that are still debated and in need of further research.

The Acquisition of Word Order Springer Science & Business Media

The contributions in this volume are based on an analysis of data from bilingual children acquiring French and German simultaneously. The longitudinal studies started at approximately age one year and six months and continued till age six. The papers focus on the development of specific grammatical phenomena; explanations are given within the framework of the Principle and Parameter approach. The study is primarily concerned with the acquisition of so-called 'functional categories' and the consequences of their acquisition for the development of grammar. Specific

points dealt with in these papers include: gender, number and case and their internal structure (DP vs NP); inflection and its consequences for agreement marking; and word order phenomena (subject-raising constructions (incl. passives), word order in subordinate clauses). The basic hypothesis underlying this study is that early child grammars consist only of lexical categories and that functional categories are implemented later in the child's grammar. How this happens exactly is the central issue explored in this book.

The Free Word Order Phenomenon Walter de Gruyter

This book provides a number of studies of different aspects of Swedish child language. Some of the thematic chapters present original, unpublished data: on the acquisition of tense, on the range and frequency of different word order patterns in early child Swedish, related to the input, meaning the language of adults talking to the children or in the presence of the children. The remaining chapters present overviews of previous research: on the acquisition of word formation rules, the noun phrase, and wh-questions. The introduction to this volume contains a concise overview of the basic features of Swedish grammar and a comprehensive overview of different Swedish child language corpora. The main body of research proceeds within a generative framework, but the text is designed to be accessible to researchers of different theoretical paradigms.

The Acquisition of Word Order in Korean Springer Science & Business Media

The topic of variation in language has received considerable attention in the field of general linguistics in recent years. This includes research on linguistic micro-variation that is dependent on fine distinctions in syntax and information structure. However, relatively little work has been done on how this variation is acquired. This book focuses on how different types of variation are expressed in the input and how this is acquired by young children. The collection of papers includes studies of the acquisition of variation in a number of different languages, including English, German, Greek, Italian, Korean, Norwegian, Swiss German, Ukrainian, and American Sign Language. Different kinds of linguistic variation are considered, ranging from pure word order variation to optionally doubly filled COMPs and the resolution of scopal ambiguities. In addition, papers in the volume deal with the extreme case of variation found in bilingual acquisition.

Language Acquisition and the Functional Category System Walter de Gruyter

"In this book, linguistic achievements of word order studies in Chinese have been applied to Chinese second language acquisition research. By analyzing a great number of word order errors made by learners of Chinese as a foreign language (CFL), this book has developed a method for describing and explaining Chinese word order errors. With this method, the book has the potential to empower CFL teachers all over the world to teach Chinese in an informed manner, and particularly to teach Chinese word order more effectively and efficiently." --Book Jacket.

The Acquisition of German John Benjamins Publishing

This volume focuses on different aspects of language development. The contributions are concerned with similarities and differences between first and second language acquisition, the acquisition of sentence structure and functional categories, cross-linguistic influence in bilingual first language acquisition as well as the relation between language acquisition, language contact and diachronic change. The recurrent topic of the volume is the link between linguistic variation and the limitation of structural variability in the framework of a well-defined theory of language. In this respect, the

volume opens up new perspectives for future research.

John Benjamins Publishing

This collection of papers investigates two specific linguistic phenomena from the point of view of first- and second-language acquisition. While observations on the acquisition of scrambling or pronominal clitics can be found in the literature, up until the recent past they were sparse and often buried in other issues. This volume fills a long-existing gap in providing a collection of articles which focus on language acquisition but at the same time address the overarching syntactic issues involved (for example, the X-bar status of clitics, base-generation vs. movement accounts of scrambling). This volume contains an overview of L1 (and, in one case, L2) acquisition data from a number of different languages including Bernese, Swiss, German, Dutch, English, French, German, Italian, Spanish and Swedish, as well as from several theoretical points of view with these two clause-internal processes at its center. These language acquisition data are considered to be crucial in the validation of analyses of these specific linguistic phenomena in adult grammars. The contributions in this volume include the earliest thoughts in this vein and, for this reason, should be viewed as a starting point for discussions within theoretical linguistics and language acquisition alike.

Non-primary Language Acquisition of Word Order in German Walter de Gruyter

Lisa is 4 years and 5 months old and Giulia 3 years and 4 months. One morning, the girls' father is taking them to nursery school. L: ... e bravissima, ha riscaldato l'auto. E' bravissima, vera? In praising the sun for having warmed up the car, Lisa has referred to it in the feminine gender, as in the German die Sonne. Her father corrects her by using the masculine gender. F: E' bravissimo. E' if sale. L: E' un maschietto, if sale? (Is the sun a little boy?) F: E' maschife. (It's masculine.) G [determined]: E' una femmina! (No, it's a girl!) F: Forse in tedesco. (Perhaps it is in German.) is left disoriented, speechless. Giulia This book is devoted to language acquisition in children who have been exposed to two languages since birth. It has often been said that the study of simultaneous bilingualism is the "most fertile ground" for the formulation of general theories on language acquisition processes, and indeed, most of the studies on early bilingualism aim in this direction. But in a sense this book serves the reverse purpose. Using the results of psycholinguistic research as a basis, I have sought to understand the peculiarities of the process of language organization in the child who faces the problem of learning two languages when other children are learning only one. Thus, the recurring theme of my study is the diversity of bilingual as opposed to monolingual acquisition.

Acquisition of Word Order in Chinese as a Foreign Language John Benjamins Publishing

Studies of language acquisition have largely ignored processing principles and mechanisms. Not surprisingly, questions concerning the analysis of an informative linguistic input - the potential evidence for grammatical parameter setting - have also been ignored. Especially in linguistic

approaches to language acquisition, the role of language processing has not been prominent. With few exceptions (e. g. Goodluck and Tavakolian, 1982; Pinker, 1984) discussions of language performance tend to arise only when experimental debris, the artifact of some experiment, needs to be cleared away. Consequently, language processing has been viewed as a collection of rather uninteresting performance factors obscuring the true object of interest, namely, grammar acquisition. On those occasions when parsing "strategies" have been incorporated into accounts of language development, they have often been discussed as vague preferences, not open to rigorous analysis. In principle, however, theories of language comprehension can and should be subjected to the same criteria of explicitness and explanatoriness as other theories, e. g. , theories of grammar. Thus their peripheral role in accounts of language development may reflect accidental factors, rather than any inherent fuzziness or irrelevance to the language acquisition problem. It seems probable that an explicit model of the way(s) processing routines are applied in acquisition would help solve some central problems of grammar acquisition, since these routines regulate the application of grammatical knowledge to novel inputs.

The Acquisition of Relative Clauses Psychology Press

The subject of this two part work is the acquisition of language structure in which the development of syntax and morphology is examined by investigations on children without language problems and on children with developmental dysphasia. The author uses a comparative acquisition study to provide insights into the structure and development of the language acquisition device, which cannot be obtained by isolated analysis of only one type of learning. The theoretical framework used for the investigations is the learnability theory, in which acquisition models are proposed which are heavily influenced by theoretical linguistics. Part I shows how child grammar acquisition can be explained in the framework of learnability theory and Part II deals with deficiencies in normal grammar acquisition using the learnability theory.

Language Acquisition across Linguistic and Cognitive Systems Springer Science & Business Media

Within a new model of language acquisition, this book discusses verb second (V2) word order in situations where there is variation in the input. While traditional generative accounts consider V2 to be a parameter, this study shows that, in many languages, this word order is dependent on fine distinctions in syntax and information structure. Thus, within a split-CP model of clause structure, a number of micro-cues are formulated, taking into account the specific context for V2 vs. non-V2 (clause type, subcategory of the elements involved, etc.). The micro-cues are produced in children's L-language grammars on exposure to the relevant input. Focusing on a dialect of Norwegian, the book shows that children generally produce target-consistent V2 and non-V2 from early on, indicating that they are sensitive to the micro-cues. This includes contexts where word order is dependent on information structure. The children's occasional non-target-consistent behavior is accounted for by economy principles.

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