

Grammars and Populations

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March 27, 2009

Thinking about the actuation problem for syntactic change:

- (limits to) language contact as a source of language change
- (limits to) adult innovation as a source of syntactic change
- (limits to) inertia
- any role for first language acquisition?

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1. Variation in quantifier scope in adult and child Korean (Han, Lidz and Musolino 2007)

- (1) a. John_i sakwa-lul twu kay an mek-ess-ta
John-NOM apple-ACC two piece NEG eat-PST-DECL
“John didn’t eat two apples.” (short negation)
- b. John_i sakwa-lul twu kay mek-ci ani ha-yess-ta
John-NOM apple-ACC two piece eat-CINEG do-PST-DECL
“John didn’t eat two apples.” (long negation)

Interpretations:

- (2) a. +/+ It’s not the case that John ate two apples.
b. +/* There were two apples that John didn’t eat.

2. Variation in possessives in child Dutch (Kampen and Corver 2004)

- (3) a. Stijn-tje-se moeder kwam ons halen (Dutch child language: 6;7.14)
Stijntje-se mother came us get (Stijntje is a girl’s name)
Standard adult : Stijntjes moeder kwam ons halen
- b. Dit is wie-se? (Dutch child language: 6;3)
This is whose?
Standard adult: Van wie is dit?
- (4) a. vader-sen hond (dialect of Helmond)
father-sen dog
- b. wie-se stoel (dialect of Helmond)
who-se chair

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(5) Standard Dutch doubling construction (limited to animate possessors):

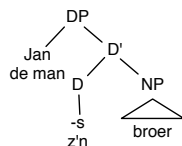
- a. Jan z'n broer
Jan his brother
- b. Els d'r broer
Els her brother
- c. de man z'n broer
The man his brother
- d. het meisje d'r broer
The girl her brother
- e. *? de boot z'n romp
the boat his/its hull

(6) Standard Dutch possessor -s construction (limited to proper names)

- a. Jans broer
Jan-s brother
- b. *hems broer
him-s brother
- c. *de mans broer
the man-s brother
- d. *de boots romp
the boat-s hull

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(7)



(8)

Realization of D-head	Example	Dialect
D = ϕ	hum jas (him coat)	Oud-Beierland
D = -n, n, -en	Piet-en boek (Pete-en book) Hemn jas (him -n coat)	Zaans dialect
D = -e	hum(m)-e vogel (him-e bird)	Brabant
D = -se(n)	vadersen hond (father-sen dog)	Helmond

- (9) a. Child 1: D = -n Sannen (= Sannes/that of Sanne); Saskian (= Saskias); Tinken (= Tinkes)
- b. Child 2: D= -se jullie-se poppen / mekaar-se spullen / dit is wie-se? / het is Agnes-se / dat is Joep-se youpl-se dolls / each other-se things / this is who-se? / it is Agnes-se/ that is Joep-se

Note: The Dutch children fail to recognize that *z'n* is the reduced/clitic form of the pronoun *zijn* and overgeneralize it as a possessive affix. Both the scope of the overgeneralization and the phonetic forms of the affix are paralleled in regional Dutch dialects.

3. Acquisition of English *wh*- question inversion (Labov and Labov 1976, Thornton 2004)

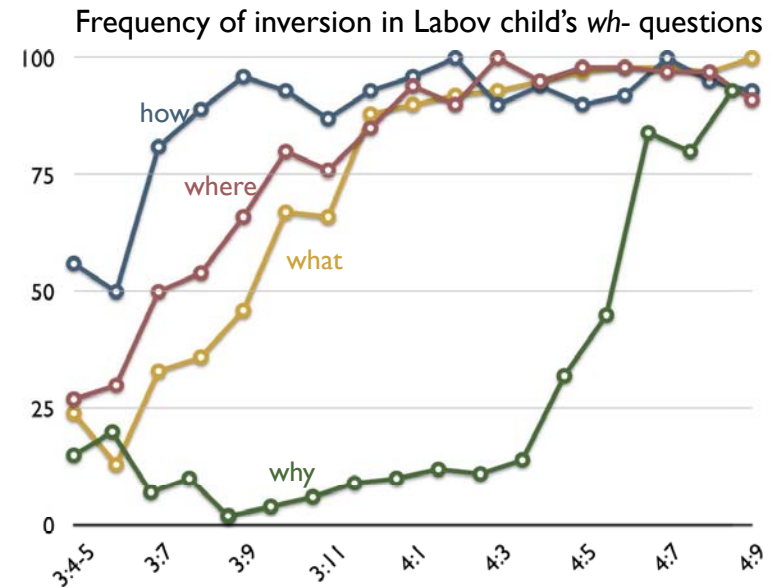
- (10) a. Where this comes from?
- b. What *not* starts with?
- c. How them buy their tents?
- d. Why we can't wear sneakers?
- (11) a. Where's Philadelphia?
- b. What does the sun do to snow?
- c. How do babies get inside the mommies?
- d. Why are we going down?

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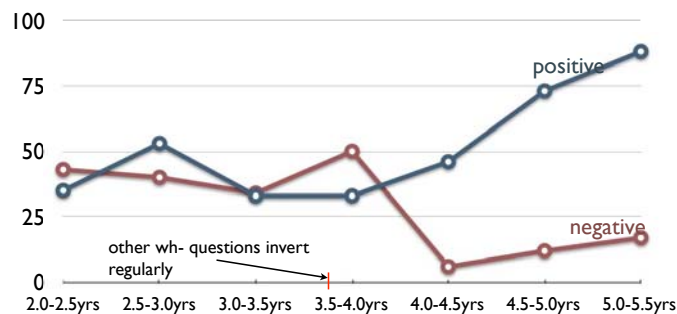
- (12) a. Why that boy is looking at us?
 b. Why you gotta went to a conference?
 c. Why we can't go in the upstairs bed?
 d. Why anyone's not sitting in that seat?
- (13) a. Why you didn't bring me to Margie's house?
 b. Why she doesn't like bananas?
 c. Why Daddy's never coming to watch?
- (14) a. Che cosa ha fatto Gianni?
 what thing has done Gianni
 b. *Che cosa Gianni ha fatto
- (15) a. Perché Gianni è venuto?
 why Gianni is come
 b. Perché è venuto Gianni?



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Frequency of subject-aux inversion in A. L.'s 'why' questions, positive and negative



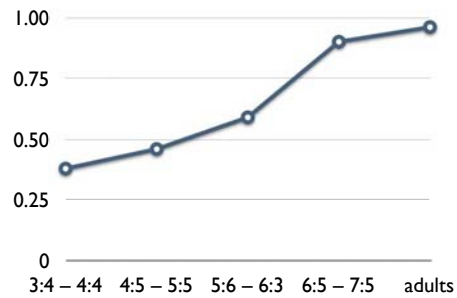
4. English *tough*-movement (Anderson 2005)

- (16) The king was hard to draw.
- (17) a. The king_i was hard [_i to draw]
 "It was hard for the king to draw (something)."
 b. The king_i was hard [to draw _i]
 "It was hard (for someone) to draw the king."
- (18) He found the natives very hard to believe that the fact was possible.
 (1726-7 Swift *Gulliver's Travels*, book III.x)
- (19) þe blak of þe yʒe is hardest to be helid
 the black of the eye is hardest to be healed
 "The pupil of the eye is hardest to heal."
- (20) O João é sempre difícil de pagar.
 the John is always difficult to pay

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Frequency of subject control interpretations in *tough*-movement sentences by young children



- (21) From a maneuverability perspective, the airplane is very easy to go to regimes that other aircraft can't go. Lt. Col. Jeffrey Harrigian, USAF, 43rd Fighter Squadron commander quoted in the AETCNS web newsletter #081803266, Aug. 18, 2003.

The End