

graded productivity of endings therefore plays an important role in the paper.

99-302 Plunkett, Kim (U. of Oxford, UK). Development in a connectionist framework: rethinking the nature-nurture debate. *Odense Working Papers in Language and Communication* (Odense U., Denmark), **16** (1998), 1–22.

It is often assumed that connectionist models of development take a *tabula rasa* approach to learning. This paper asserts that in fact all connectionist models involve a strong commitment to innate processing mechanisms and theories about the effective learning environment. Nevertheless, connectionist modelling is seen by the author as offering a valuable tool for investigating a wide range of hypotheses about the role of nature and nurture in development. The paper tries to demonstrate how connectionist models can contribute to an understanding of the mechanisms underlying linguistic and cognitive development. The central issues considered include: the interpretation of dissociations in behaviour as indicating dissociations of underlying mechanisms; the view that new behaviours are the result of the emergence of new mechanisms; the assumption that domain specific knowledge demands the application of domain specific learning devices; and the belief that complex problems require complex start states.

99-303 Ragnarsdóttir, Hrafnhildur (U. Coll. of Ed., Reykjavik, Iceland), **Simonsen, Hanne Gram and Bleses, Dorte**. Experimental evidence on the acquisition of past tense inflection in Danish, Icelandic and Norwegian children. *Odense Working Papers in Language and Communication* (Odense U., Denmark), **16** (1998), 23–41.

Recent research in the first-language acquisition of past tense morphology has focused on the role played by input factors such as the phonological properties of verbs and their type and token frequencies. This paper reports some aspects of a cross-linguistic study of children's acquisition of past tense inflection of Danish, Icelandic and Norwegian, testing the effects of these factors. Parallel experiments were conducted for the three languages, involving three groups of 30 children aged four, six and eight. Past tense forms of 60 verbs were elicited from each child. The results show a clear developmental effect in all three languages. Both frequency and phonological factors clearly play a role, both for correct performance and for error types. Children generalise to all the main inflectional classes, but to a varying degree, and their generalisation patterns change during development. Interesting cross-linguistic differences are also found and the results suggest that phonological complexity is a greater and longer-lasting challenge for children than morphological complexity.

99-304 Tomasello, Michael, Brooks, Patricia J. and Stern, Elissa (Emory U., Atlanta, USA). Learning to produce passive utterances through

discourse. *First Language* (Chalfont St. Giles, UK), **18**, 2 (1998), 223–37.

Regardless of any biological predispositions for language that may exist, children must still individually learn the particular syntactic constructions of their particular native language. Although it is widely accepted that 'input' is important in this process, very little is known about the precise ways in which children use the language they hear from adults to learn to produce syntactic constructions themselves. One particularly interesting construction in this regard is the English passive, which children acquiring English typically do not produce in full sentences until 4–5 years of age. This paper reports two studies of English-speaking children's acquisition of the passive construction. In the first, children at 3.0 and 3.5 years of age were taught to produce full passive utterances with a nonce verb through rich discourse interaction. In the second study, some 3.0-year-old children were given rich discourse interactions containing truncated passives, passive questions, and *by* passives, but never heard a full passive utterance as a whole; other children were given only models of full passive utterances with no discourse scaffolding. Only children who heard full passive utterances produced them. The children who participated in rich discourse interactions produced truncated passives (as they had heard). These results are taken to demonstrate that children can learn to produce full passive sentences with a nonce verb at three years of age, but, in accordance with Tomasello's 1992 verb island hypothesis, they tend to do so only within the syntactic constructions in which they have heard adults using that verb.

Pragmatics

99-305 Davis, Kathryn A. (U. of Hawai'i, USA) and **Henze, Rosemary C.** Applying ethnographic perspectives to issues in cross-cultural pragmatics. *Journal of Pragmatics* (Amsterdam, The Netherlands), **30**, 4 (1998), 399–419.

Although a relationship naturally exists between ethnography and cross-cultural pragmatics, it is suggested here that this relationship has not been fully explored. The purposes of the paper are to clarify the assumptions underlying ethnography and to suggest ways in which issues in cross-cultural pragmatics can be approached from an ethnographic perspective. To this end, the authors examine the philosophy, goals and methods that underlie ethnographic work. They then provide two illustrations of how an ethnographer examines issues in cross-cultural pragmatics, specifically, second language education and cross-cultural communication in the workplace. They conclude by offering suggestions as to how researchers in cross-cultural pragmatics might best go about integrating ethnographic methods in their work.

99-306 Sasaki, Miyuki (Nagoya Gakuin U., Japan). Investigating EFL students' production of

speech acts: a comparison of production questionnaires and role plays. *Journal of Pragmatics* (Amsterdam, The Netherlands), **30**, 4 (1998), 457–84.

The study reported here compares two popular measures of second language pragmatic competence: production questionnaires (traditionally called ‘discourse completion tests’) and role plays. Participants were 12 Japanese university students representing three different English proficiency levels, who responded to both measures for the same four request and four refusal situations. Response length, range and content of the expressions, and native speaker evaluations of these responses were analysed. The production questionnaire and role-play elicited somewhat different production samples: responses to the role plays were longer and showed a larger number and greater variety of strategies/formulas, apparently due to the interactive nature of role plays. Students often switched strategies for the same situations across different methods: it is suggested that such intra-participant differences could have been missed if different participants had responded to different methods as in many previous studies. In addition, the correlation between the appropriateness scores of the two methods was not high enough to support the claim that they measured exactly the same trait. The low correlation probably resulted because the two methods produced different responses, but also because the role play responses provided additional audio-visual information, which might have affected the raters’ evaluations. These findings are taken to suggest that production questionnaire scores cannot simply be substituted for role play scores.

Bilingual education/ bilingualism

99–307 Albert, Ruth (Philipps-Universität, Marburg, Germany). Das bilinguale mentale Lexikon. [The bilingual mental lexicon.] *Deutsch als Fremdsprache* (Berlin, Germany), **35**, 2 (1998), 90–97.

This article reviews models of the monolingual and the bilingual lexicon and suggests how the problem of contradictory and inconclusive findings may be overcome by a model which takes into account the internal structure of lexical representations. The review comments on evidence for one common store of lexical entries, for two separate stores, and, in relation to abstract lexemes and cognates, for both. This is followed by an account of the author’s own previous work into interference phenomena among Dutch learners of German. This includes errors in German due to (simultaneous) activation of Dutch lexical entries. However, not all morpho-syntactic features are subject to interference. It is claimed that speakers therefore do not activate full lexical forms, but create forms from individual mor-

phemes. An alternative connectionist model of the bilingual mental lexicon is proposed which allows not only for simultaneous activation of words related to the same concept, but also for the simultaneous activation of words which share the same form. The author concludes that, rather than assuming connections between full lexical forms, future research should investigate the connections between elements within these forms.

99–308 Appel, René (U. of Amsterdam, The Netherlands) and **Vermeer, Anne**. Speeding up second language vocabulary acquisition of minority children. *Language and Education* (Clevedon, UK), **12**, 3 (1998), 159–73.

The importance of lexical skills in language development and school achievement is widely recognised. Migrant children in the Netherlands lag far behind their Dutch classmates with respect to vocabulary in Dutch. To speed up their acquisition of vocabulary in the first four grades of primary school, an experimental programme was designed. This article presents the results of the evaluation of this programme. A longitudinal experiment tracked both an experimental and a comparison group ($n = 57$, resp. 53), who were pre-tested and post-tested each year with curriculum-dependent and -independent lexical tests. In addition, their vocabulary and text reading abilities were tested in 5th and 7th grade to examine whether the programme had broader and long-term effects. The outcomes suggest that it is possible to increase the rate at which minority children acquire second language vocabulary. In each grade, the children in the experimental group out-performed those in the comparison group. By the end of the 4th grade, the experimental group children were one or two years ahead of their comparison group age peers in Dutch vocabulary, and were able to maintain their position in 7th grade. However, they did not attain the level of their Dutch classmates, and were in fact lagging one year behind.

99–309 Boyle, Joseph (Chinese U. of Hong Kong). What hope for trilingual Hong Kong? *English Today* (Cambridge, UK), **14**, 4 (1998) 34–39.

This article examines the challenge of trilingualism facing Hong Kong as a Special Administrative Region (SAR) of Continental China. It presents examples of trilingual societies (India, South America, the Philippines) where the mother tongue is the local language, the second language functions as an intranational language and English is the international language of business. Evidence is cited to suggest that bilingualism in Hong Kong has been declining with fewer opportunities to use English and falling standards in English education. To improve standards in English and Chinese by eradicating the ‘mixed code’ which is widely used, the government has changed three-quarters of its secondary schools from English medium to Cantonese-only. The article next explores the status of Mandarin (Putonghua), which few Hong Kong Chinese speak fluently. Generally, the young are motivated to learn