

Grammatical Features and the Acquisition of Reference

A Comparative Study of Dutch and Spanish

Published by

LOT
Trans 10
3512 JK Utrecht
The Netherlands

phone: +31 30 253 6006
fax: +31 30 253 6000
e-mail: lot@let.uu.nl
<http://www.let.uu.nl/LOT/>

ISBN 90-76864-05-5
NUGI 941

Copyright © 2000 by Sergio Baauw

Cover photo: Mozarabic façade, Santiago de Peñalba, León (Spain)

Printed in the Netherlands

Table of Contents

Acknowledgments	vii
Introduction	1
Chapter 1: The acquisition of pronouns and definite articles: pragmatic and syntactic aspects	3
1.1. Universal grammar, modularity and acquisition	3
1.2. The syntax of definite articles and pronouns	5
1.2.1. Definite articles and pronouns as instantiations of D	5
1.2.2. Syntactic constraints on the interpretation of pronouns and DPs: the Binding Theory	11
1.3. The acquisition of D: the role of underspecification, rich morphology and pragmatics.	14
1.3.1. Underspecification of functional categories	14
1.3.2. Richness of inflectional morphology and acquisition	18
1.3.3. The acquisition of reference	21
Chapter 2: Underspecification of the D-position	25
2.1. Introduction	25
2.2. Non-specific NPs in adult and child language: previous research	26
2.2.1. Introduction	26
2.2.2. Children's interpretation of "home"	26
2.2.3. VP/IP ellipsis in child language	27
2.2.4. Light-verb constructions in children and adults	28
2.3. "Non-specific NPs" are DPs headed by expletive determiners	30
2.4. Light-verb constructions in child Spanish	35
2.4.1. Introduction	35
2.4.2. The experiment	38
2.4.2.1. Goal of the experiment	38
2.4.2.2. Procedure and design	39
2.4.2.3. Subjects	49
2.4.2.4. Results	49
2.4.3. Discussion	53
2.4.4. Conclusion	57
2.5. Constructions of Inalienable Possession (CIPs)	58