

IN THIS ISSUE

- [Updates about the 12<sup>th</sup> International Congress for the Study of Child Language, Montréal, 19-23 July 2011](#)
  - [Progress Report on PhonBank](#)
  - [SemTalk- Working with CHILDES on Semitic Languages](#)
  - [Forthcoming Conferences and Workshops](#)
  - [Conference and Workshop Calls](#)
  - [New CHILDES Corpora](#)
  - [Book Announcements](#)
  - [Thesis Announcements](#)
  - [Further Announcements](#)
  - [From the Editor](#)
  - [IASCL Donation Drive](#)
  - [Membership](#)
- 

[Updates about the 12th International Congress for the Study of Child Language, Montréal, 19-23 July 2011](#)

By Henri Cohen, Université du Québec à Montréal & Université Paris Descartes - CNRS



The organization and program of the IASCL Montreal-2011 conference is progressing at a good pace. There are also important amendments and clarifications to announce. Please note that the submission deadlines have been extended by 2 weeks.

**August 15, 2010** is the deadline for symposia submissions.

**October 15, 2010** is the deadline for poster submissions.

We have also received a few queries about authorship and responsibility for an abstract. Below is the clarification:

There is one responsible person per abstract. Although co-authors and their affiliations may be listed in an abstract, a contributor may only be responsible for one oral (symposium) presentation and one poster presentation. Thus, a contributor may deliver **not more than one oral presentation**. Responsible authors appear as first author in the abstracts that they are presenting (one oral and/or one poster presentation). The number of times a contributor may be listed as a co-author is not limited.

For further details, please download the complete amended call for abstracts from <http://iascl.org/bulletins/bulletinV30N1.html> .

We look forward to reading your abstracts and seeing you in Montreal!

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### Progress Report on PhonBank

By Brian MacWhinney (Carnegie Mellon University) & Yvan Rose (Memorial University of Newfoundland)

This is a report on the progress of the NIH-funded PhonBank Project. The goal of this project is the construction of a database for the study of phonological development called PhonBank and a program for the analysis and creation of these data called Phon. The project involves a collaboration between Brian MacWhinney at Carnegie Mellon University and Yvan Rose at Memorial University of Newfoundland. Use of the program and creation of the database is being further supported by a consortium group of about 80 researchers at 30 research sites. The project is now in its fourth year and we would like the child language community to know what we have achieved so far.

The two core achievements so far are the completion of version 1.4 of the Phon program and the construction of PhonBank. Version 1.4 of Phon, set for release in July, meets all of the specifications for the program outlined in the original proposal. In particular, it includes systems for: project management, media linkage and segmentation, blind IPA transcription, transcription validation, target (adult) IPA form insertion, automatic phone alignment between target and actual (produced) forms, automatic syllabification, utterance segmentation into smaller units, database query, data import, and data export. Interested users can download copies of Phon from the CHILDES website. Currently, the manual for Phon is built into the program. However, we will soon have a version that is available externally too.

The PhonBank database is available over the web from <http://chilides.psy.cmu.edu/data>. It is available in two forms. The basic PhonBank database is encoded in standard CHAT format and supports analysis with the CLAN programs. The PhonBank-Phon files have the same corpora encoded in Phon format for analysis with the Phon program. The conversion between CHAT and Phon formats relies on the fact that they both can use the same format of XML. CLAN can read the XML by using the CHATTER converter and Phon can read the XML by using an import utility. The PhonBank database now has 90MB of transcript data from 72 children speaking 8 languages, accompanied by audio and video data. All corpora have linked audio, except as noted. The corpora currently in PhonBank are these:

- Dutch-Zink: 4 children (1;5 - 3;7)
- English-Davis: 21 children (1;0-3;0)
- English-Inkelas: 1 child (transcripts only)
- English-Smith: 1 child (transcripts only)
- French-Kern: 4 children (0;8 - 2;1)
- French-RoseGoad: 2 children (1;0 - 4;0)
- German-Stuttgart: 6 children (1;0 - 3;0)
- Japanese-Ota: 3 children (1;0 - 2;6)
- MCF: 2 Portuguese-Swedish bilinguals (0;1 - 4;0)
- Romanian-Kern: 2 children (0;9 - 2;1)
- Stanford-English/French/Japanese/Swedish: 16 children (transcripts only)
- Tunisian-Kern: 4 children (0;9 - 2;2)

This set of corpora is a good beginning, but the total amount of good quality phonologically-coded data available to PhonBank is at least five times the size of what we have currently in the database. In particular, we have identified an additional 54 corpora in 22 languages that we can eventually add to PhonBank. During the next phase of the project, we hope that we can include all this additional data to the PhonBank database.

Our plans for expansion of Phon focus on (1) achieving linkage to Praat to support the management of acoustic analysis data, (2) providing additional methods for phonological data analysis and visualization, and (3) configuring Phon to compute a variety of standard measures and scores used in the clinical and educational evaluation of phonological development.

In order to introduce the community to Phon, Yvan Rose has made presentations over the last 4 years at the University College in London, ZAS in Berlin, the International Child Phonology meetings in Memphis and Vancouver, BUCLD in Boston, the Universidad Autónoma in Barcelona, the International Association for the Study of Child Language in Edinburgh, CatCod in Orléans, Maison des Hommes in Paris, several meetings in Lisbon, and summer schools on corpus building and analysis in Moissac, France and Augsburg, Germany.

We have established a Google mailing list for issues related to the use of Phon, and we have created a manual describing the shape of the database and made it possible to playback sessions in the database directly from browsers. We have also provided metadata that permits indexing of the database through the IMDI ([http://corpus1.mpi.nl/ds/imdi\\_browser/](http://corpus1.mpi.nl/ds/imdi_browser/)) and OLAC (<http://www.language-archives.org/>) language resources publishing systems.

The construction of PhonBank and Phon rests on a set of five basic principles regarding the desired shape of a database on phonological development.

1. **Quality.** It is crucial that all of the data in PhonBank be of the highest quality. The general acceptance of IPA as a transcription standard helps provide a core level of quality control. In addition, PhonBank has adopted the CHAT transcription format of the CHILDES project. This format is given in the CHAT manual (<http://childes.psy.cmu.edu/manuals/chat.pdf>) and in the fully documented CHAT XML Schema (<http://talkbank.org/software/xsddoc>). By using the CHATTER XML roundtrip checker, we can guarantee that all PhonBank data are in exact accord with the standards of this schema. We further guarantee accuracy of transcription by methods for reliability checking inside Phon.
  
2. **Quantity.** The construction of an accurate phonological transcription is an exceedingly time consuming process. As a result, the total quantity of phonologically transcribed data is far less than that for orthographically transcribed child language data. However, the testing of hypotheses in phonological development is just as dependent on large quantities of data as are other areas of language studies. This means that PhonBank needs to have much more data from more languages and more children. For individual children it also needs more data across a longer time period with denser sampling. Much of this data has been recorded and is available, but putting this all into high quality phonological notation is a major task.
  
3. **Linkage.** PhonBank transcriptions must be carefully linked to the corresponding segments of the audio or video recordings. Accurate media linkage is crucial for good playback during analysis and quantitative acoustic analysis, the latter being central to our current application.
  
4. **Accessibility.** All of the materials in PhonBank must be fully accessible to all researchers without the barriers of licenses or other restrictions. Except for data from participants with special clinical syndromes, full anonymization of both the transcripts and the audio allows us to provide full access to the database for all researchers, directly through web browsers.
  
5. **Structure.** Phonological transcriptions must be structured in ways that permit accurate cross-tier alignment of phonological segments produced by language learners to their (adult) targets and to facilities in CLAN for automatic morphological tagging and syntactic analysis. This alignment is achieved in CHAT by creating a tight definition of rules for one-to-one alignment between the %pho line for phonological coding and the %mor line for part of speech coding, the %gra line for grammatical relation coding, and the main line orthographic transcription.

The goal of PhonBank is to bring all of the current data sets and the new data to be added during the second period into compliance with these five principles. Once this goal is achieved, it will be possible to reexamine the core claims made by theories of phonological development.

While many of these claims may stand up to the stronger tests that PhonBank will make possible, it is also likely that analyses and theories will change in many ways, once they are tested against this newer, more reliable database.

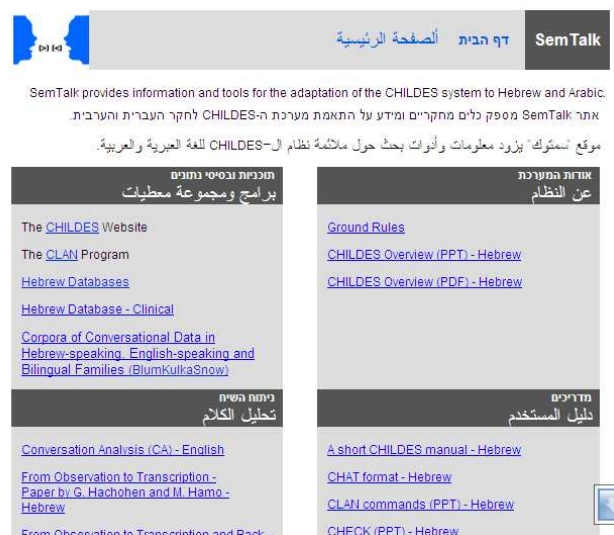
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## SemTalk- Working with CHILDES on Semitic Languages

By Sigal Uziel-Karl, Haifa University and Ono Academic College

Using CHILDES to work on Semitic languages like Hebrew and Arabic poses many challenges to language researchers. A very basic one, for example, is the need to adapt the Roman transcription symbols to accurately describe the sounds of these languages. A more complicated challenge involves the construction of a MOR Grammar for the morphological analysis of Hebrew and Arabic databases.

In the past decade, considerable efforts have been made to advance the use of CHILDES for the study of these languages by making certain adaptations and developing designated tools. The SemTalk website (<http://semtalk.talkbank.org>), launched in 2006, provides a platform for publicizing these advances for the benefit of the researcher community worldwide. The website offers information in Hebrew on the use of CHILDES, on the Hebrew and Arabic transcription conventions and on research relating to the acquisition of these languages. It has links to Hebrew databases, to numerous practice tools and to various websites devoted to the study of Hebrew and Arabic. In addition, the site has a discussion group that individuals are invited to join and post queries in order to exchange ideas with other scholars who share similar interests (<http://groups.google.com/group/SemTalk>). Readers are encouraged to contribute to the site any new material on relevant topics for the benefit of the language researcher community worldwide.



## NEWS AND ANNOUNCEMENTS

### FORTHCOMING CONFERENCES AND WORKSHOPS

**What:** Workshop on Dummy Auxiliaries in (A)typical First and Second Language Acquisition

**When:** 1-2 July 2010

**Where:** Radboud University Nijmegen, The Netherlands

**Details:** [http://www.ru.nl/cls/events\\_news/cls-events/@712782/workshop-dummy/](http://www.ru.nl/cls/events_news/cls-events/@712782/workshop-dummy/)

**What:** The 3rd UK Cognitive Linguistics conference (UK-CLC3)

**When:** 6-8 July 2010

*Where:* University of Hertfordshire, UK

*Details:* <http://uk-clc3.org>

**What:** The 21st International Congress of the International Society for the Study of Behavioral Development (ISSBD)

*When:* 18- 22 July 2010

*Where:* Lusaka, Zambia, Africa

*Details:* [www.issbd2010.com](http://www.issbd2010.com)

**What:** PhonBank: Future Directions

*When:* 27-30 July 2010

*Where:* Memorial University of Newfoundland, Canada

*Inquiries:* Carla Dunphy ([cddunphy@mun.ca](mailto:cddunphy@mun.ca)); Yvan Rose ([yrose@mun.ca](mailto:yrose@mun.ca))

*Details:* see "Further Announcement"

**What:** Workshop on Semantic Development: An Interdisciplinary Approach (in the 2010 Annual Meeting of the Cognitive Science Society, CogSci 2010)

*When:* 11 August 2010

*Where:* Portland Oregon, USA

*Details:* <http://cognitivesciencesociety.org/conference2010/workshops.html>; <http://cognitivesciencesociety.org/uploads/w2.pdf>

**What:** Measuring Behavior 2010: The 7th International Conference on Methods and Techniques in Behavioral Research

*When:* 24 - 27 August 2010

*Where:* Eindhoven, The Netherlands

*Details:* [www.measuringbehavior.org](http://www.measuringbehavior.org)

**What:** Clinical Education Conference

*When:* 31 Aug- 2 Sep 2010

*Where:* City University London, UK

*Details:* <http://www.city.ac.uk/lcs/clinicaleducationconference.html>

**What:** The Generative Approaches to Language Acquisition in North America (GALANA 4)

*When:* 1-3 September 2010

*Where:* Toronto, Canada

*Details:* <http://www.spanport.utoronto.ca/galana4/>

**What: The 20th Annual Conference of the European Second Language Association (EUROSLA20)**

**When:** 1-4 September 2010

**Where:** Reggio Emilia, Italy

**Details:** <http://eurosla.org/eurosla20home.html>

**What: The 6th International Conference on Construction Grammar (ICCG-6)**

**When:** 3-5 September 2010

**Where:** Prague, Czech Republic

**Details:** <http://constructiongrammar.org/iccg6>

**What: AMLaP 2010 Architectures and Mechanisms for Language Processing**

**When:** 6-8 September 2010

**Where:** York, UK

**Details:** <http://www.psycholinguistics.com/amlap>

**What: The 6th International Conference on Language Acquisition**

**When:** 8-10 September 2010

**Where:** Barcelona, Spain

**Details:** <http://stel.ub.edu/cial2010>

**What: The British Psychological Society Developmental Psychology Section Conference**

**When:** 12-15 September 2010

**Where:** London, UK

**Details:** <http://www.gold.ac.uk/bps2010>

**What: Language as Social Coordination: An Evolutionary Perspective**

**When:** 16-19 September 2010

**Where:** Warsaw, Poland

**Details:** [www.psych.uw.edu.pl/lasc](http://www.psych.uw.edu.pl/lasc)

**What: Language Impairment in Monolingual and Bilingual Society (LIMoBIS 2010)**

**When:** 27 September - 1 October 2010

**Where:** Aalborg, Denmark

**Details:** <http://limobis.aau.dk/speakers.html>

**What: Donostia Workshop on Neurobilingualism**

**When:** 30 September- 2 October 2010

**Where:** Donostia - San Sebastián, Spain

**Details:** <http://www.bcbl.eu/events/neurobilingualism/>

**What: The 2010 Second Language Research Forum (SLRF 2010)**

**When:** 14-17 October 2010

**Where:** University of Maryland, USA

**Details:** <http://www.webspace.umd.edu/SLRF2010/>

**What: The 6th Annual Symposium of the Society for Language Development**

**When:** 4 November 2010

**Where:** Boston, USA

**Details:** <http://www.bcs.rochester.edu/sld/symposium.html>

**What: The 35th Boston University Conference on Language Development (BUCLD 35)**

**When:** 5-7 November 2010

**Where:** Boston, USA

**Details:** <http://www.bu.edu/linguistics/APPLIED/BUCLD>

**What: Experimental Approaches to Perception and Production of Language Variation (ExAPP2010)**

**When:** 11-12 November 2010

**Where:** Groningen, Netherlands

**Details:** <http://www.rug.nl/let/exapp2010>

**What: Conference on Competing Motivations**

**When:** 23-25 November 2010

**Where:** Max Planck Institute for Evolutionary Anthropology, Leipzig, Germany

**Details:** <http://www.eva.mpg.de/lingua/conference/10-CompetingMotivations/index.html>

**What: Experimental Methods in Language Acquisition Research (EMLAR VII)**

**When:** 3-4 Feb 2011

**Where:** Utrecht, Netherlands

**Details:** announced later

**What: 12th Tokyo Conference on Psycholinguistics 2011 (TCP2011)**

**When:** 11-12 March 2011

**Where:** Tokyo, Japan

**Details:** announced later

**What: The 16th World Congress of Applied Linguistics (AILA2011)**

**When:** 23-28 August 2011

**Where:** Beijing, China

**Details:** <http://www.aila2011.org/en/>

#### CONFERENCE AND WORKSHOP CALLS

**What: The 85th Annual Meeting of the Linguistic Society of America**

**When:** 6-9 January 2011

**Where:** Pittsburgh, USA

**Details:** <http://www.lsadc.org/info/meet-annual.cfm>

**Submission Deadline:** 30 July 2010 (for revised version of an organized session proposal); 31 July 2010 (for abstracts for talks and posters)

**What: Workshop on Discourse-Coherence Mechanisms and Pronominal Anaphora in Language Acquisition** (in the annual meeting of the German Linguistic Society (Deutsche Gesellschaft für Sprachwissenschaft DGfS))

**When:** 23-25 February 2011

**Where:** Göttingen, Germany

**Details:** Milena Kuehnast ([kuehnast@zas.gwz-berlin.de](mailto:kuehnast@zas.gwz-berlin.de)) and Natalia Gagarina ([gagarina@zas.gwz-berlin.de](mailto:gagarina@zas.gwz-berlin.de))

**Submission Deadline:** 23 Aug 2010

**What: The Society for Research in Child Development 2011 Biennial Meeting (SRCD 2011 Biennial Meeting)**

**When:** 31 March - 2 April 2011

**Where:** Montreal, Canada

**Details:** <http://www.srkd.org/submissions2011/callforsubmissions.cfm>

**Submission Deadline:** 13 Aug 2010

**What: The Eighth International Symposium on Bilingualism (ISB8)**

**When:** 15 -18 June 2011

**Where:** University of Oslo, Norway

**Details:** <http://www.hf.uio.no/isb8>

**Submission Deadline:** 1 Oct 2010 (for colloquia); 15 Oct 2010 (for papers and posters)

**What: The 12th International Pragmatics Conference**

**When:** 3-8 July 2011

**Where:** Manchester, UK

**Details:** <http://ipra.ua.ac.be/main.aspx?c=.CONFERENCE12&n=1403>

**Submission Deadline:** 1 Sep 2010 (for panel proposals); 29 Oct 2010 (for contributions to panels and individual proposals for lectures and

posters)

**What: The 11th International Cognitive Linguistics Conference (ICLC 11, 2011)**

**When:** 11-17 July 2011

**Where:** Xi'an, China

**Details:** <http://www.iclc11.org/>

**Submission Deadline:** 15 Oct 2010 (for theme session proposals); 15 Nov 2010 (for abstracts)

**What: The 12th International Congress for the Study of Child Language (IASCL 2011)**

**When:** 19-23 July 2011

**Where:** Montreal, Canada

**Details:** <http://iascl2011.org/>

**Submission Deadline:** 1 Aug 2010 (for symposia); 1 Oct 2010 (for individual posters)

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## NEW CHILDES CORPORA

### New Farsi Corpus

A new corpus on the acquisition of Farsi was contributed by the Neiloufar Family of the Institute of Cognitive Science in Tehran and COLAJE in Paris. The corpus features the girl Lilia between the ages of 1;11 and 2;10 and it is fully linked to audio and fully tagged on the %mor line. The audio quality is excellent and the linkage is very accurate, as can be heard over the web-based browser at:

<http://chilDES.psy.cmu.edu/browser/index.php?url=Other/Farsi/Family/lilia/>

### Two New Corpora on British English:

#### Lara Corpus

This corpus is a contribution from Caroline Rowland at the University of Liverpool. The corpus consists of 120 hours of audio recorded speech from one child interacting with her caregivers between 1;9 and 3;3, and a written diary record for the child's *wh*-questions produced between 2;7 and 3;3. The files were analyzed with an earlier version of MOR and the %mor line will be eventually updated.

#### Thomas Dense Corpus

This corpus is a contribution from Jeannine Goh and Elena Lieven of the MPI Child Study Centre in Manchester. This corpus is far and away the densest corpus yet available in CHILDES. Thomas was recorded intensively throughout the period of 2;0 to 4;11, and particularly so during the period from 2;0 to 3;2. The corpus now on the web does not include a %mor line, but that will be added later in the year. By way of comparison, the classic three-child Brown corpus has a size of about 23MB without the additional %mor and %gra lines, and the single-child Thomas corpus

has a size of 123 MB. Moreover, the Thomas corpus is fully linked to audio and the transcripts linked to audio can be listened to directly over the web through the CHILDES browser. Last names and addresses have been removed from the transcripts and audio to maintain anonymity.

Details regarding both corpora can be found in the database manual for UK English on the web.

#### **Leo Dense Database**

This dense corpus features the German child Leo, and is the second corpus of the Leipzig-Manchester-MPI dense database corpora. The corpus is created by Heike Behrens and contributed by Heike and Elena Lieven. For large segments of his development, Leo was recorded on a daily basis, yielding a total corpus size of 53MB, much like the 63MB Leipzig-Manchester-MPI dense corpus for the English-speaking child Thomas.

#### **Renner-Marchman-Slobin English Frog Story Corpora Reformatted**

The Renner-Marchman-Slobin English frog story corpora have been reformatted into current CHAT format. They are now back on the internet in the Frogs directory with the other frog story corpora.

#### **Spanish Clinical Corpus**

This corpus features 52 Spanish-speaking teenagers with various levels of mental retardation. The corpus, known as CORDIS, is in the clinical segment of CHILDES and was contributed by the GrupoLCVL research team at the PROMIVA Foundation of Teresa Fernández de Vega Losada, Sara Lena Díaz, Gema García Marcos, and Elena Cabeza Pereiro. The corpus currently has 52 subjects providing narratives of TV programs and videos. The goal is for the corpus to eventually have 160-200 subjects.

Because of the special nature of this population, the GrupoLCVL team asks that anyone interested in using this corpus first contact them at [grupolcvl@gmail.com](mailto:grupolcvl@gmail.com).

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## **BOOK ANNOUNCEMENTS**

*Editors:* Elma Blom & Sharon Unsworth

*Title:* Experimental Methods in Language Acquisition Research

*Publisher:* John Benjamins

*ISBN:* 978-90-272-1996-1 (hardbound); 978-90-272-1997-8 (paperback); 978-90-272-8795-3 (e-book)

*Experimental Methods in Language Acquisition Research* provides students and researchers interested in language acquisition with comprehensible and practical information on the most frequently used methods in language acquisition research. It includes contributions on first and child/adult second language learners, language-impaired children, and on the acquisition of both spoken and signed language. Part I discusses specific experimental methods, explaining the rationale behind each one, and providing an overview of potential participants, the

procedure and data-analysis, as well as advantages and disadvantages and dos and don'ts. Part II focuses on comparisons across groups, addressing the theoretical, applied and methodological issues involved in such comparative work. This book will not only be of use to advanced undergraduate and postgraduate students, but also to any scholars wishing to learn more about a particular research method. It is suitable as a textbook in postgraduate programs in the fields of linguistics, education and psychology.

**More information:**

[http://www.benjamins.com/cgi-bin/t\\_bookview.cgi?bookid=LL%26LT%2027](http://www.benjamins.com/cgi-bin/t_bookview.cgi?bookid=LL%26LT%2027)

*Author:* Eve Clark

*Title:* First Language Acquisition (New Second Edition)

*Publisher:* Cambridge University Press

*ISBN:* 978-0-5215-1413-2 (hardback); 978-0-5217-3293-2 (paperback)

Babies are not born talking, they learn language, starting immediately from birth. How does this process take place? When do children master the skills needed for using language successfully? What stages do they go through as they learn to understand and talk? Do the languages they learn affect the way they think? This new edition of Eve Clark's highly successful textbook focuses on children's acquisition of a first language, the stages of development they go through, and how they use language as they learn. It reports on recent findings in each area covered, includes a completely new chapter on the acquisition of two languages and shows how speech to children differs by social class. Skillfully integrating actual data with coverage of current theories and debates, it is an essential guide to studying language acquisition for those working in linguistics, developmental psychology and cognitive science.

*Author:* Madalena Cruz-Ferreira

*Title:* Multilinguals are...?

*Publisher:* Battlebridge Publications

*ISBN:* 978-1-9032-9220-4

Multilinguals are people who use several languages in their everyday life. Attitudes towards them are very diverse: some consider them gifted or unusually intelligent, while others fear that they are not fully competent in any one language. This can lead to conflicting advice about multilingualism at home, in school, and elsewhere, particularly nowadays when awareness about multilinguals is growing wherever several languages are used, from London and Amsterdam to New York and California.

This is the first book which discusses, in lay terms, the reasons behind the beliefs and myths traditionally associated with multilinguals. It is written for the general public and is relevant for families, teachers, and everyone else who ever wondered about multilingualism. The style is light, often witty, but is founded on a thorough knowledge of all the solid academic research on this subject.

**More information:**

<http://www.battlebridge.com/>

Available in the USA through William, James & Co., <http://www.wmjasco.com/>

*Author:* Madalena Cruz-Ferreira

*Title:* Multilingual Norms

*Publisher:* Peter Lang Publishing Group

*ISBN:* 978-3-631-59637-1

Multilinguals are not multiple monolinguals. Yet multilingual assessment proceeds through monolingual norms, as if fair conclusions were possible in the absence of fair comparison. In addition, multilingualism concerns what people do with language, not what languages do to people. Yet research focus remains on multilinguals' languages, as if languages existed despite their users. This book redresses these paradoxes. Multilingual scholars, teachers and speech-language clinicians from Europe, Asia, Australia and the US contribute the first studies dedicated to multilingual norms, those found in real-life multilingual development, assessment and use. Readership includes educators, clinicians, decision-makers and researchers interested in multilingualism.

**More information:**

<http://www.peterlang.com/Index.cfm?VID=59637&vLang=E>

*Author:* François Grosjean

*Title:* Bilingual Life and Reality

*Publisher:* Harvard University Press

*ISBN:* 978-0-6740-4887-4

Whether in family life, social interactions, or business negotiations, half the people in the world speak more than one language every day. Yet many myths persist about bilingualism and bilinguals. Does being bilingual mean you are equally fluent in two languages, or that you belong to two cultures, or even that you have multiple personalities? Can you become bilingual only as a child? Why do bilinguals switch from one language to another in mid-sentence? Will raising bilingual children confuse and delay their learning of any language?

In this book, François Grosjean, an international authority on bilingualism and son of an English mother and a French father, explores the many facets of bilingualism, drawing on research, interviews, autobiographies, and the engaging examples of bilingual authors. He describes the various strategies—some useful, some not—used by parents raising bilingual children, explains how children easily pick up and forget languages, and considers how bilingualism affects the experience and expression of emotions, thoughts, and dreams.

This book shows that speaking two or more languages is not a sign of intelligence, evasiveness, cultural alienation, or political disloyalty. For millions of people, it's simply a way of navigating the complexities of life.

*Author:* Simona Montanari

*Title:* Language Differentiation in Early Trilingual Development: Evidence from a Case Study

*Publisher:* VDM Verlag Dr. Müller

*ISBN-10:* 3639236181    *ISBN-13:* 978-3639236187

Current research on multilingual acquisition is concerned with whether children exposed to multiple languages from birth build separate language systems from early on or a single system comprised of elements of all languages. While several studies have shown that developing bilinguals show signs of language differentiation from the onset of speech, very little work has been done on children learning more than two languages. This book examines the emergence of three languages - Tagalog, Spanish, and English - in a child raised in a trilingual environment and focuses on the process of language differentiation from the perspective of phonology, lexicon, word order, and language choice. These analyses shed light on a child's ability to develop various components of the three languages and suggest that multilingual exposure does not slow down the process of language differentiation. The results of this study and their implications will be of interest to those working in linguistics, developmental psychology, and related fields, who are interested in the processes and mechanisms involved in multilingual children's language and cognitive development.

*Author:* Zuzana Ondrackova

*Title:* Comparative Research of Child Lexis (written in Slovak)

*Publisher:* Prešov University in Prešov

*ISBN:* 978-80-555-0166-6

The monograph presents results of comparative research in a special area of lexis used by children aged between two and five (child speech) and adults when talking to children (child-directed speech) in the Slovak and English languages. It is written in Slovak and it focuses on the term child word (in the Anglo-American linguistic tradition the term babytalk form is preferred), its status and main characteristics within Slovak and Anglo-American linguistics. Although the theoretical background of the study is based on the linguistic tradition of both languages, it offers a new definition of the term child word as well as the classification and brief characteristics of individual child word types in the Slovak and English languages.

The child words are defined as all words in a language with positive emotional qualities that are primarily used in child-directed speech and in child speech. They are divided into 1. diminutives, 2. euphemisms, 3. expressions denoting kinship, 4. interjections and onomatopoeic expressions and 5. metaphoric and metonymic expressions.

The child lexis in both languages is analysed from phonemic, syllabic, morphological, word-formative and semantic points of view. The results of these analyses are subsequently compared in order to find similarities and differences in child words of the analysed languages.

Phonemic characteristics deal with the frequency of vowels and consonants in child words and try to identify the central and peripheral phonemes in the Slovak and English child lexis. It also concentrates on consonant clusters - their frequency, position and structure. Syllabic characteristics focus on the number of syllables, frequency of short and long syllables and the structure of the syllable in Slovak and English

child words.

As far as morphological characteristics are concerned, the attention is focused on word classes, particularly on the concordance between general meaning of a word class and the form by which it is expressed, because the child lexis shows several peculiarities in this respect.

Word-formative characteristics focus on the frequency of motivated and unmotivated child words and the structure of motivated lexemes: the types of word-formative bases have been identified; word-formative elements and their frequency have been analysed and word-formative processes which participate in coining Slovak and English child words have been specified. The motivated units have been further classified into word-formative types, onomasiological categories and types of onomasiological categories.

Semantic characteristics of child words concentrate on meanings of lexemes, especially on relations between form and meaning within individual lexemes (symmetry or asymmetry between form and meaning) and on mutual relations among forms and meanings within the Slovak and English child lexis.

**More information:**

<http://www.pulib.sk/elpub2/FF/Ondrackova1/index.html>

*Editor:* Richard G. Schwartz

*Title:* Handbook of Child Language Disorders

*Publisher:* Psychology Press

*ISBN:* 978-1-84169-433-7

The *Handbook of Child Language Disorders* provides an in-depth, comprehensive, and state-of-the-art review of current research concerning the nature, assessment, and remediation of language disorders in children. The book includes chapters focusing on specific groups of childhood disorders (SLI, autism, genetic syndromes, dyslexia, hearing impairment); the linguistic, perceptual, genetic, neurobiological, and cognitive bases of these disorders; and the context of language disorders (bilingual, across dialects, and across languages). To examine the nature of deficits, their assessment and remediation across populations, chapters address the main components of language (morphology, syntax, semantics, and pragmatics) and related areas (processing, memory, attention, executive function such as reading and writing). Finally, even though there is extensive information regarding research and clinical methods in each chapter, there are individual chapters that focus directly on research methods. This *Handbook* is a comprehensive reference source for clinicians and researchers and can be used as a textbook for undergraduate, masters, and doctoral students in speech-language pathology, developmental psychology, special education, disabilities studies, neuropsychology and in other fields interested in children's language disorders.

**Table of Contents**

**Part 1. Typology of Child Language Disorders.** *R.G. Schwartz*, Specific Language Impairment. *A. McDuffie*, *L. Abbeduto*, Language Disorders in Children with Mental Retardation of Genetic Origin: Down Syndrome, Fragile X Syndrome, and Williams Syndrome. *J. Gerenser*, Language

Disorders in Children with Autism. *M. Cleary*, Language Disorders in Children with Hearing Impairment. *S.E. Shaywitz, J.R. Gruen, M. Mody, B.A. Shaywitz*, Dyslexia.

**Part 2. Bases of Child Language Disorders.** *J. Botwinik-Rotem, N. Friedmann*, Linguistic Bases of Child Language Disorders. *B. Tropper, R.G. Schwartz*, Neurobiology of Child Language Disorders. *R.B. Gillam, J.W. Montgomery, S.L. Gillam*, Attention and Memory in Child Language Disorders. *J. Edwards, B. Munson*, Speech Perception and Production in Child Language Disorders. *J.B. Tomblin*, Genetics of Child Language Disorders. *M.F. Joanisse*, Model-Based Approaches to Child Language Disorders.

**Part 3. Language Contexts of Child Language Disorders.** *E.D. Peña, L.M. Bedore*, Bilingualism in Child Language Disorders. *L.B. Leonard*, Cross-Linguistic Studies of Child Language Disorders. *J.A. Washington*, Language Variation in Child Language Disorders.

**Part 4. Deficits, Assessment, and Intervention in Child Language Disorders.** *J.B. Oetting, P.A. Hadley*, Morphosyntax in Child Language Disorders. *K.K. McGregor*, Semantics in Child Language Disorders. *P. Fletcher*, Syntax in Child Language Disorders. *M. Fujiki, B. Brinton*, Pragmatics and Social Communication in Child Language Disorders. *P.E. Hook, C.W. Haynes*, Reading and Writing in Child Language Disorders. *J. Windsor, K. Kohnert*, Processing Speed, Attention, and Perception in Child Language Disorders.

**Part 5. Research Methods in Child Language Disorders.** *L. Seiger-Gardner*, Language Production Approaches to Child Language Disorders. *P. Deevy*, Language Comprehension Approaches to Child Language Disorders. *M.E. Fey, L.H. Finestack*, Research and Development in Child Language Intervention: A Five-Phase Model. *V.L. Shafer, N.D. Maxfield*, Neuroscience Approaches to Child Language Disorders.

**More information:**

<http://www.cognitivepsychologyarena.com/handbook-of-child-language-disorders-9781841694337>

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## THESIS ANNOUNCEMENTS

*Author:* Elena Florit

*Title:* Listening Text Comprehension in Preschoolers: Concurrent and Longitudinal Contribution of Cognitive and Linguistic Components

*Institution:* University of Padua - Italy

The thesis is available as a pdf file from Elena Florit (elena.florit@unipd.it)

The present investigation aimed to identify some of the lower- and higher-level linguistic and cognitive component skills that account for individual differences in listening text comprehension in Italian preschool children. Four- to six-year-old typically developing children participated in four cross-sectional studies and one longitudinal study. Four studies aimed at investigating (a) concurrent specific relations between listening text comprehension, on one hand, and lower- and higher-level linguistic and cognitive components, on the other hand, and (b) the developmental path of these relations between 4 and 6 years of age. The fifth study aimed at analyzing longitudinal and causal relations between the specific concurrent predictors identified in the cross-sectional studies, and listening text comprehension evaluated at six to eight months of distance.

Results from the four cross-sectional studies showed that verbal intelligence, receptive vocabulary, verbal short-term and working memory, and the ability to use linguistic context and inferential skills specifically contributed to listening text comprehension and these relations were

stable between 4 and 6 years of age. Non-verbal intelligence and sentence comprehension did not specifically account for preschoolers' text understanding. Results of the longitudinal study showed that verbal intelligence, receptive vocabulary and the ability to use linguistic context were causally related to listening text comprehension. Moreover, inferential skills indirectly accounted for later listening text comprehension.

Overall, the findings showed that verbal intelligence and receptive vocabulary, among the lower-level components, and the ability to use linguistic context and inferential skills, among the higher-level components, were the most relevant factors in accounting for preschoolers' listening text comprehension.

*Author:* Claire Noble

*Title:* Early Comprehension of Argument Structure and Semantic Roles

*Institution:* The University of Liverpool

Research has demonstrated that young children quickly acquire knowledge of how the structure of their language encodes meaning. However this research has centred on a relatively small number of studies, all from within the intermodal preferential looking paradigm. One aim of the present work was to replicate these findings using both the intermodal preferential looking paradigm and a new paradigm - the forced choice-pointing paradigm - to test developmentally 2 to 4 year old children's knowledge of syntactic structure. A further aim of the thesis was to investigate the precise nature of the grammatical knowledge that underlies children's early grammatical competence specifically focusing on children's understanding of a range of morphologically marked cues to number present in intransitive sentences.

The results of the present work suggest that young two year olds have associated transitive structures with causal (or externally caused) events and can use transitive structure to assign agent and patient roles correctly. However, the children do not appear to have made the association between intransitive structure and non-causal events until aged 3;4 and are only sensitive to one cue to number present in intransitive sentences up to the age of 4;6. The results are the first to show that young two year olds have verb-general knowledge of argument structure using a measure that requires an overt behavioral response and the first to show a developmental pattern in the acquisition of the intransitive from age 2 to 4 years.

The present work has both theoretical and methodological implications. First, the present work has shown that the FCPP is a suitable tool for measuring comprehension of argument structure in children as young as 2;0. Second, the present work has shown that children aged 2;0 have verb-general knowledge of transitive argument structure but it remains unclear whether this knowledge represents fully abstract adult-like syntactic knowledge. Given this uncertainty future work should focus on what type of verb-general knowledge children have and what cues they are sensitive to and most importantly how this changes through development.

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## FURTHER ANNOUNCEMENTS

**CHILDES Homepage: One Million Mark**

The number of "hits" to the CHILDES home page since 2003 passed the one million mark sometime in late March 2010. Brian MacWhinney,

director of CHILDES, also noticed that the number of hits to the web page seems to be an accelerating function, which is another nice signal. Child language researchers from around the world expressed their gratitude to Brian MacWhinney, Catherine Snow, Leonid Spektor and their team for creating, maintaining and developing CHILDES throughout the years.

During the “One Million Mark” discussions on the info-childes list, Brian added that this is an achievement for the entire field of child language research, for (1) its continued and growing commitment to data-sharing; (2) its willingness and interest in exploring new methods in transcription, media linkage, and corpus analysis; and (3) its growing commitment to basing replicable theoretical analyses on openly shared data. He further commented that the child language field should also recognize our indebtedness to the computer scientists who have built the programs and internet interfaces upon which we increasingly rely, as well as to ongoing input from areas as diverse as speech science, computational linguistics, network modeling, linguistic theory, statistics, and conversation analysis. Brian hoped that child language people could communicate to their colleagues in closely-allied areas such as second language learning, aphasiology, sociolinguistics, and classroom discourse, the excitement and scientific progress that can arise through this type of increased commitment to data-sharing.

#### **CHILDFREQ: A Tool to Explore Word Frequencies in Child Language**

Rasmus Bååth at Lund University Cognitive Science has created a web site devoted to the analysis of lexical frequency patterns in the American and British English segments of the CHILDES corpora. The site is located at <http://childfreq.sumsar.net>, and there is now a link to this site and the PDF of the paper describing the system from the CHILDES home page.

#### **CLEX: A Cross-linguistic Lexical Norms Database**

Researchers and others interested in early vocabulary development may find the newly elaborated CLEX website useful. The website (<http://www.cdi-clex.org>) is a collaboration of the CDI Advisory Board and the Center for Child Language, University of Southern Denmark. It contains detailed lexical norms for all words included in the MacArthur-Bates CDI for American English and adaptations of the CDI into Mexican Spanish, Danish, Swedish, and Croatian. CLEX was inspired by the collaborative success of the CHILDES system, and it is hoped that additional language datasets will be incorporated into the system soon. The website permits a range of query functions, both within and across languages, including evaluation of user-defined subscales. More information on the CLEX website is included in an article in the March 2010 issue of the *Journal of Child Language*, ‘CLEX: A cross-linguistic lexical norms database’, by Rune Nørgaard Jørgensen, Philip S. Dale, Dorthe Bleses & Larry Fenson.

#### **Contextual Self-Organizing Map Package**

Xiaowei Zhao, Ping Li and Teuvo Kohonen developed a software package (CTM\_pack) that can automatically derive semantic representations of words from text corpora. The algorithm relies on the analyses of contextual information extracted from a text corpus, specifically, analyses of word co-occurrences in large-scale electronic database of text. A target word is represented as the combination of the average of all the words preceding the target and all the words following it in a text corpus. The semantic representation of the target words can be further presented to a self-organizing map (SOM, Kohonen, 2001), an unsupervised neural network model that provides efficient data extraction and representation. The method has been applied to extract semantic representations for Chinese and English words. Such a representation system can be used for a variety of purposes, including computational modeling of language acquisition and processing.

The tool can be downloaded at <http://sites.google.com/site/xiaoweizhao/tools> . The program is written in MatLab, and should be run under the MatLab Environment.

#### **Journal of Child Language**

Please note that from 2010 Journal of Child Language will no longer be carrying book reviews.

Special Issue on Computational Models of Child Language Learning, Volume 37, Issue 03, June 2010

Details: <http://journals.cambridge.org/action/displayIssue?jid=JCL&volumeld=37&issueId=03&iid=7614672>

Cambridge University Press is inviting applications for two positions of Co-editor of *Journal of Child Language* (deadline: 31 July 2010)

Details: [http://journals.cambridge.org/images/fileUpload/documents/JCL\\_Editors\\_ad.pdf](http://journals.cambridge.org/images/fileUpload/documents/JCL_Editors_ad.pdf)

#### **New Journal: Linguistic Approaches to Bilingualism**

John Benjamins Publishing is pleased to announce a new journal to be published in 2011: *Linguistic Approaches to Bilingualism* (LAB). For details, please visit: <http://benjamins.com/catalog/lab>

#### **Website for Arabic Acquisition Project**

Website for the project "Baseline Data for Arabic Acquisition with Clinical Applications": <http://lughataltefel.qu.edu.qa>

#### **Website on Multilingualism**

A revamped website, run from the USA, to serve families and anyone with queries about the topics of multilingualism:

<http://www.multilingualliving.com/>

#### **Workshop on PhonBank: Future Directions (27-30 July 2010, Memorial University of Newfoundland)**

By Yvan Rose (Memorial University of Newfoundland)

Since 2006, the PhonBank Project, a new initiative within the CHILDES project (<http://childes.psy.cmu.edu/>), has provided researchers and students with a new publicly-available database documenting phonological development across various languages and populations. The elaboration and use of this database is supported by the Phon software application, which provides specialized functionality for scientific research in phonological development. During the workshop researchers and members of the PhonBank research consortium will meet to discuss the current state of the PhonBank initiative and the related Phon software application. Through formal presentations of their own work and their participation in roundtable discussions, the participants will define scientific and related technological areas where the project can be expanded.

Workshop participants:

Laetitia Almeida, University of Lisbon  
May Bernhardt, University of British Columbia  
Cynthia Core, George Washington University  
Barbara Davis, University of Texas, Austin  
Paula Fikkert, Radboud University Nijmegen  
Maria João Freitas, University of Lisbon  
Heather Goad, McGill University  
Gregory Hedlund, Memorial University of Newfoundland  
Sophie Kern, Laboratoire Dynamique du Langage  
Clara Levelt, Leiden University  
Brian MacWhinney, Carnegie Mellon University  
Aliyah Morgenstern, Université Paris 3 Sorbonne Nouvelle  
Mits Ota, University of Edinburgh  
Christophe Parisse, Université de Paris-Ouest Nanterre  
Yvan Rose, Memorial University of Newfoundland  
Joe Stemberger, University of British Columbia

Workshop organizers:

Carla Dunphy (cddunphy@mun.ca)

Yvan Rose (yrose@mun.ca)

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## FROM THE EDITOR

The Child Language Bulletin is the official newsletter of the IASCL Association, and it is published twice a year on the [website](#). All members of the association will receive an e-mail message each time a new issue of the Bulletin is published.

I encourage members to submit news and information that might be relevant to our research community, for instance, report on a conference or workshop, announcements about forthcoming conferences and workshops, new CHILDES corpora, books, and completed PhD Theses, conference and workshop calls, book reviews, and surveys. We need your contributions to keep the Bulletin abreast of developments in our field.

Please send any items that are of interest to the IASCL community to [editor.iascl.clbulletin@gmail.com](mailto:editor.iascl.clbulletin@gmail.com).

I look forward to receiving your submissions!

Angel Chan

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### IASCL DONATION DRIVE

The IASCL is a worldwide organization, which means that it aims to serve child language researchers in all countries of the world. Child language research is important everywhere, both from a theoretical perspective (cf. for instance the significance of cross-linguistic evidence) and from a more applied point of view (cf. for instance the need for good description to allow for the assessment of language learning problems). Unfortunately financial considerations are often a hindrance to the development of scientific disciplines in countries with severe economic problems. The IASCL has always been supportive of would-be IASCL members working in such countries by waiving membership fees for them.

IASCL funds are limited, though. In the past, donations from regular IASCL members have been very helpful in supporting colleagues from economically disadvantaged countries. In order to continue offering that support, your donations are very welcome indeed. Each donation, whatever the amount, will be acknowledged by a receipt signed by the IASCL Treasurer (useful perhaps for tax purposes). Please contact [Dr Theakston](#) for further details.

#### **Cheques in pounds sterling payable to IASCL can be sent to:**

Dr Anna Theakston

IASCL Treasurer

University of Manchester

Department of Psychology

Oxford Road

Manchester M13 9PL

UK

Cash payments in pounds sterling can also be made by prior arrangements with [Dr Theakston](#) at the above address.

The IASCL as a whole will be sure to benefit from the more diversified nature of its membership as a result of your donations. Many thanks in advance!

Anna Theakston, IASCL Treasurer

[anna.theakston@manchester.ac.uk](mailto:anna.theakston@manchester.ac.uk)

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## MEMBERSHIP

You are strongly encouraged to join IASCL or renew your membership by paying membership fees through our conference web site around the time of each triennial conference. If, however, you did not attend the last conference, and have not since renewed your membership, you can do so now. Current membership fees are £50 for regular members, and £27 for students. Members are eligible for a substantial discount for volumes 1-6 of TiLAR, and for a reduced subscription fee to the following journals: the Journal of Child Language, First Language, and the International Journal of Bilingualism. Your fees will contribute to the organization of the upcoming Congress and they will be especially valuable in the provision of student travel bursaries.

### Fees:

Membership (£50 for regular members; or £27 for students\*) is for three years, and expires on the first day of the next triennial Congress, to be held in the summer of 2011 in Montreal. Members in countries with nonconvertible currencies or currency transfer restrictions or other economic difficulties should request a waiver of the membership fee. Additional contributions for the support of colleagues and program in countries with currency and/or economic difficulties are welcomed. Please get in touch with [the Treasurer](#).

To join IASCL or renew your membership, please complete the [online registration form](#). To make your payment, please telephone 00 44 1361 884466 and ask to speak to Colette or Katherine, explaining that you wish to pay IASCL membership fees OR email [colette@foxfleming.co.uk](mailto:colette@foxfleming.co.uk).

We will be able to take most credit/debit cards except American Express and Diners Club Card. Please note that credit card payments attract an administration fee of £5. \*If you wish to pay the student membership fee, please send proof of student status to the treasurer at the address below:

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For more information, please visit <http://www.iascl.org/join.html>.