

Acquisition of Negation and Negative Concord

The literature history to date especially Klima & Bellugi (1966) and Bellugi (1967), report that English children learning English language differ from their adults in expressing negation through negative words or roughly the words that induce negation in utterances. Children start from more 'no' and less 'not' and gradually add other negative words in their lexicon but parents utter most of their negative utterances using negative auxiliary words i.e. don't, can't, isn't, etc. Consequently, there is an observed mismatch between child and Child-Directed Speech (CDS). Based on the corpora of the Child Language Data Exchange System (CHILDES), the current research study follows Zeijlstra's (2004, 2007, 2008a, b) Negative Concord Parameter, according to which languages interpret negation through an adverb or license it syntactically through a negative head, in the latter case the language is a Negative Concord language. As per the developmental patterns of a child's cognition, we adopt that children start from most economic value that means that at an early stage of acquisition of negation, negation is expressed through an adverb. And later in the course of acquisition children add the head form Neg^0 of negation through a functional projection $NegP$ that is then able to license negative concord. English is a very interesting language to study because it has an adverbial form and a head form too. So based on the linguistic evidence Neg head we propose that English is a hidden NC language. Current study investigates the acquisition of negative concord in child language.