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ABSTRACTS



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Presuppositional Knowledge in Children's Narrative. Dina Anselmi, Trinity College, Hartford, CT., Jacqueline Sachs, & Jacquelyn Bertrand, University of Connecticut, Hartford, CT.

The choice of communicative forms reflects not only the communicative intent of the speaker, but also the presuppositions that the speaker holds about the listener and the genre of the discourse. Speakers must decide, of all they could say in any given instance, what must be said and what must be omitted. Recent research has established that young children possess some impressive communicative skills, but the picture is far from complete concerning the assumptions children make about listener knowledge during discourse, especially as that interacts with discourse genre. Some critical questions therefore are what defines mutual knowledge for young children and whether children at different ages assume that different conditions are necessary for establishing mutual knowledge. Children may initially believe that only physical co-presence is sufficient, but gradually learn that there are other conditions that can allow for a shared perspective such as linguistic co-presence and various kinds of community membership. The purpose of this study was to investigate the kinds of assumptions children make about their listeners' needs when they are engaged in narrative discourse, as reflected in their choice of words and nonverbal behavior.

Language Separation in the Bilingual Child. Lenore Arnberg, Department of Linguistics, Stockholm University, Stockholm, Sweden, & Suzanne Schlyter, Department of Romance Languages, University of Hamburg, Hamburg, West Germany.

In the area of simultaneous bilingual acquisition the process by which the young child learns to separate the two languages is still poorly understood. By language separation is here meant that the child does not use words/sentences in the wrong language in a clearly monolingual context. In order to account for this process it is necessary to consider the child's linguistic level, balance and input factors, and the child's awareness of the bilingual presentation. Results from longitudinal data on eight (French-German, English-Swedish, and Russian-Swedish speaking) children have indicated that children at Stage I in their linguistic development (see Clahsen 1986) nearly always mix the two languages while children at Stage V (see Clahsen op.cit.) nearly never do. Between stages II and IV however children show different mixing patterns depending on the weighting of the above-mentioned factors which, in the present study, have been studied by means of the analyses of speech samples, interviews with parents and a specially designed bilingual awareness test.