Centre for General Linguistics

CROSSLINGUISTICALLY ROBUST STAGES OF CHILDREN'S LINGUISTIC PERFORMANCE

COST A33 Training School in Language Acquisition Methods
30th March – 3rd April 2009

PROGRAM AND
GENERAL INFORMATION

PROGRAM

Location: Centre for General Linguistics (ZAS)
              10117 Berlin, Germany
              Schützenstr. 18,
              3rd Floor Trajectory room

Monday 30th March

Time	Title	Speaker
8:00-9:00	Registration	
9:00-9:45	**Introduction - Training School in Language Acquisition Methods**	Dr. Natalia Gagarina
9:45-11:15	course 1 - **ERP: Method and data**	Claudia Männel
15'	COFFEE BREAK	
11:30-13:00	course 1 - **ERP: Method and data**	Dr. Regine Oberecker
13:00 – 13:30	Discussion; work-out of concrete experiment designs	
13:30 – 15:00	LUNCH BREAK	
15:00 – 16:30	course 2 - **Eyetracking**	Tom Fritzsche Oda Brandt
15'	COFFEE BREAK	
16:45 – 18:15	course 2 - **Eyetracking**	Tom Fritzsche Oda Brandt

Tuesday 31st March

9:30-11:00	course 1 - **ERP: Children with Specific Language Impairment**	Dr. Beate Sabisch
15'	COFFEE BREAK	
11:15-12:45	course 1 - **ERP: Children with Specific Language Impairment**	Dr. Beate Sabisch
12:45 – 13:15	Discussion; work-out of concrete experiment designs	
13:15 – 14:15	LUNCH BREAK	
14:15 – 15:45	course 2 - **Eyetracking**	Tom Fritzsche Oda Brandt
15'	COFFEE BREAK	
16:00 – 17:30	course 2 - **Eyetracking**	Tom Fritzsche Oda Brandt
17:30 – 18:00	Discussion; work-out of concrete experiment designs	
19:00	Joint Dinner	

Wednesday 1st April

9:30-11:00	course 3, lecture 1 **Word monitoring, Self-paced reading/listening**	Dr. Theo Marinis
15'	COFFEE BREAK	
11:15-12:45	course 3, lecture 2 - **Cross modal priming, Self-paced listening + picture verification**	Dr. Theo Marinis
12:45 – 14:00	LUNCH BREAK	
14:00 – 14:45	course 3, practical 1 **Word monitoring, Self-paced reading/listening**	Dr. Theo Marinis
14:45 – 15:30	course 3, practical 2 - **Cross modal priming, Self-paced listening + picture verification**	Dr. Theo Marinis
15:30 – 16:00	Final discussion	Dr. Theo Marinis
15'	COFFEE BREAK	
16:15 – 17:45	course 4 **Experimental methods with Video-stimuli**	Dr. Natalia Gagarina Dr. Nina Kazanina
15'	COFFEE BREAK	
18:00	Joint sightseeing	

Thursday 2nd April

9:30-11:00	course 4 **Experimental methods with Video-stimuli**	Dr. Natalia Gagarina Dr. Nina Kazanina
15'	COFFEE BREAK	
11:15-12:45	course 4 **Experimental methods with Video-stimuli**	Dr. Natalia Gagarina Dr. Nina Kazanina
12:45 – 13:15	Discussion; work-out of concrete experiment designs	
13:15 – 14:15	LUNCH BREAK	
14:15 – 15:45	course 5 - **Testing children's language**	Dr. Ewa Dabrowska
15'	COFFEE BREAK	
16:00 – 17:30	course 5 - **Testing children's language**	Dr. Ewa Dabrowska
17:30 – 18:00	Discussion; work-out of concrete experiment designs	
Evening	Individual museum visits [18:00-22:00 free admission to several museums like the Pergamon Museum]	

Friday 3rd April

9:30-11:00	course 5 - **Testing children's language**	Dr. Ewa Dabrowska
15'	COFFEE BREAK	
11:15-12:45	course 6 **Elicitation experiments in language acquisition**	Dr. Sonja Eisenbeiss
12:45 – 13:45	LUNCH BREAK	
13:45 – 15:15	course 6 **Elicitation experiments in language acquisition**	Dr. Sonja Eisenbeiss
15'	COFFEE BREAK	
15:30 – 17:00	course 6 **Elicitation experiments in language acquisition**	
17:00 – 17:30	Discussion; work-out of concrete experiment designs	Dr. Sonja Eisenbeiss
15'	COFFEE BREAK	
17:45 – 18:45	**Final round table: What did we learn? Open questions. Food for thought. Take-home knowledge**	

Description of courses

Dr. Regine Oberecker, Claudia Männel & Dr. Beate Sabisch (Max Planck Institute for Human Cognitive and Brain Sciences, Leipzig): **ERP: Method, data and SLI**
Event-related brain potentials (ERPs) are a method to measure brain activity during a period of cognitive processing. This method has been proven to be useful in understanding the processing of language in adults and children with typical language development as well as children with developmental language disorders (e.g., SLI and developmental dyslexia). The course discusses the design of Event-Related Potentials (ERPs) experiments and theoretical and practical aspects of ERP-data interpretation. The technique of ERP will be overviewed and components crucial for language acquisition research will be introduced. The methodological advantages, the general pros and contras will be discussed at the end of the course.

Tom Fritzsche & Oda Brandt (Potsdam University):   **Eyetracking**
Eyetracking is a powerful method to investigate cognitive abilities. Within the last few years new equipment has been developed which makes it possible to test infants as young as 5 months (Aslin & McMurray 2004, Gredebäck et al. 2008). There are at least two big advantages: a) the rather implicit testing situation - the child is not required to solve a task related to the specific research question and b) the high temporal resolution of the dependent variable, which enables us to look at cognitive processes online. All the measures that eyetracking delivers (fixation durations and latencies, number of fixations, first look, scan paths, pupil size etc.) can be useful information in interpreting cognitive processes and knowledge. This course presents the method of children's eyetracking along with some background information. Then different paradigms and their technical requirements are introduced before turning to some real research examples. A special focus will be the handling and analysis of the data.

Dr. Theo Marinis (University of Reading): **On-line reaction time experiments**
Most studies investigating language comprehension have used off-line experiments to address how children and adults with typical and atypical language development comprehend words or sentences. Off-line tasks are relatively easy to construct and administer, but they often allow metalinguistic abilities to come into play. This may overestimate or underestimate the participants' language abilities depending on whether or not they have good metalinguistic abilities. On-line comprehension tasks, on the other hand, are relatively immune to metalinguistic abilities because they measure the participants' unconscious and automatic response to language stimuli.
This workshop will provide an overview of three widely used on-line sentence processing tasks (word monitoring, self-paced reading/listening, cross-modal priming) and one new task (self-paced listening and picture verification task) that can be used with adults and children with typical and atypical language development. Based on published and ongoing research with L1 and L2 adults, I will first introduce the rationale, subject selection criteria, material construction, advantages, disadvantages of each one of the four tasks. The last part of this workshop will consist of hands on experience in designing on-line experiments based on the interests of the students in the group.

Dr. Natalia Gagarina (Centre for General Linguistics, Berlin) & Dr. Nina Kazanina (University of Bristol): **Experimental methods with Video-stimuli**
The course will review the use of visual materials in language acquisition experiments. In particular, we will discuss the use of pictures and act-out stories in previous published work, including studies of object/event individuation by children, acquisition of tense and aspect, and acquisition of quantification. We will also discuss the extent to which (series of) pictures are a legitimate substitute for an object/event they depict and which properties of the object/event may be lost when they are represented through pictures. The technique of the elicited comprehension with the short video films, a modification of the [Gordon 1998] Truth Value Judgement Task will be presented and scrutinized. Studies evaluating the comprehension of aspectual and temporal distinctions by means of video-films will be presented. Pitfall and advantages of the both techniques will be highlighted.

Dr. Ewa Dabrowska (The University of Sheffield): **Testing children's language**
This course introduces some of the experimental methods used by language acquisition researchers to find out how much children know about language. We will look at a variety of techniques used to test comprehension (sentence-picture matching, preferential looking, act-out and truth value judgment tasks) and production (elicited imitation/transformation, sentence completion, sentence correction, nonce word and nonce construction tasks, picture descriptions and elicited narratives), examine their pros and cons, and reflect on why different methods sometimes produce contradictory results. The course will include a hands-on session as well as practical advice on designing experiments and motivating children to respond.

Dr. Sonja Eisenbeiss (University of Essex): **Elicitation experiments in language acquisition**
This tutorial provides an overview of experimental techniques that have been developed to elicit speech from child learners and speakers with language impairments. In particular, we will discuss elicited imitation experiments, elicited production experiments with existing words or novel words, speeded production experiments, syntactic priming experiments, input/feedback-experiments and experiments in which speakers eye-movements are monitored during elicited speech production. Moreover, we will compare such elicitation experiments, in which procedures and stimulus properties are strictly controlled, to semi-structured elicitation techniques that involve less researcher control and use videos or games to encourage the semi-spontaneous production of rich and comparable samples of spoken speech.

Organizer:
Dr. Natalia Gagarina, Mechthild Bernhard and Anja Hubert
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