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Ineta Savickienė & Wolfgang U. Dressler (eds.), *The acquisition of diminutives: A cross-linguistic perspective* (Language Acquisition and Language Disorders 43). Amsterdam & Philadelphia: John Benjamins, 2007. Pp. vi + 352.

Reviewed by LYNN SANTELMANN, Portland State University

This volume contains a rich set of papers on the acquisition of diminutives in twelve languages, together with a comprehensive and lucid introduction and conclusion by the editors. The volume is remarkable for the breadth of languages and language types covered. Both Indo-European and non-Indo-European languages are represented, with a mix of morphological systems from agglutinating to fusional (both strongly and weakly inflectional) to introflexing. The volume contains eleven longitudinal studies of early child language acquisition and two experimental studies, one with child learners and one with adults. The chapters are grouped according to language family, and the two experimental chapters follow the longitudinal studies.

The editors' 'Introduction' lays out both the major points of the background literature and the book's ambitious plan. The authors have several main goals: a typological analysis of the acquisition of diminutives, an examination of the role that both diminutives and hypocoristics (diminutive names such as 'Mommy' or 'Annie') play in the acquisition of the language, an examination of the meanings and pragmatic uses of diminutives, and finally an investigation into whether diminutives simplify the acquisition of morphological paradigms or any other aspects of the language. The introduction concludes with an overview of each of the contributions.

Chapter 1, 'Form and meaning of diminutives in Lithuanian child language', by Ineta Savickienė, discusses the acquisition of diminutives by a single Lithuanian child. Diminutives are among the first productive morphemes that occur in the child's output. The child uses diminutives frequently, and the mother's speech is similarly rich in diminutives. Diminutives are first used to express pragmatic functions of closeness or affection rather than smallness, a pattern that is found in all of the studies in the book. Savickienė argues that diminutives aid in the acquisition of the case system as 'declension classes that include diminutives emerge before those classes which do not include diminutives' (26).

Chapter 2, by Ekaterina Protassova & Maria Voeikova, 'Diminutives in Russian at the early stages of acquisition', examines data from two children. As in Lithuanian, diminutives are frequent in the data, both in the input and in the child speech. However, the children and their caregivers differ considerably in their use of the diminutives. The authors argue that diminutives

serve both a pragmatic and a morphological function. Pragmatically, diminutives are used to make the world familiar and comfortable for children. Morphologically, diminutives facilitate the acquisition of the case system; the children use more indirect case forms in diminutives than with simplex nouns in the early stages of the acquisition of the declension classes.

Chapter 3, 'The acquisition of diminutives in Croatian', by Marijan Palmović, analyzes data from a single child acquiring Croatian. Diminutives are productive and frequent in the data after age 1;9, with simplex and suffixed forms of nouns appearing side by side. Similar percentages of diminutives are seen in the child's speech and adult speech. Once again, the basic function of diminutives in the child's speech appears to be to create an atmosphere of affection rather than to indicate smallness. Palmović argues that diminutives in Croatian increase the transparency of the noun paradigms, which parallels the claims made for Russian and Lithuanian.

Chapter 4, 'Diminutives in Greek child language', by Evangelia Thomadaki & Ursula Stephany, examines the production of diminutives in a single child. The Greek data have many similarities with the data in the first three chapters. The child in Thomadaki & Stephany's study uses productive diminutives from an early age. Until age 2;3, the input contains more diminutives than the child's output, thereafter input and output closely parallel each other. With respect to meaning, the diminutives mostly have the pragmatic function of intimacy and affection. The authors argue that, while diminutives in Modern Greek do not appear to help in the acquisition of the case system, they do reduce complexity in the noun paradigms because of their stable stress pattern. The authors also argue that the inflection of diminutives develops in an item-based way (Bybee 1995, Tomasello 2003).

Chapter 5, 'The role of diminutives in the acquisition of Italian morphology', by Sabrina Noccetti, Anna DeMarco, Livia Tonelli & Wolfgang U. Dressler, examines the acquisition of Italian diminutives in four children. As with the other languages studied, the authors find that diminutives are among the earliest morphology used. The children's language and their input show parallel production of diminutives, suggesting that the use of diminutives depends on the discourse context. The meanings of diminutives first indicate intimacy and endearment, and not smallness. In contrast to the previous chapter on Greek, the authors argue for rule-based (Clahsen, Sonnenstuhl & Blevins 2003) over item-based learning. Finally, the chapter addresses the question of whether diminutives facilitate acquisition and concludes for at least several of the children that they do facilitate acquisition of unproductive classes of nouns.

Chapter 6, 'The acquisition of diminutives in Spanish', by Victoria Marrero, Carmen Aguirre & María José Albalá, examines the acquisition of diminutives by two children. Again, we see variation between the children. One of the children contrasts the diminutives with their simplex bases at an early age, while the other child does not. As in other languages, the primary

function of diminutives is pragmatic, creating a feeling of affection. The authors argue that diminutives provide the child primarily with cues for grammatical segmentation, which are helpful in later acquisition of morphology.

Agnita Souman & Steven Gillis's contribution, 'A longitudinal study of the acquisition of diminutives in Dutch', examines data from three children acquiring Netherlands Dutch. The researchers found diminutives in the earliest available transcripts, starting at about age 1;9. Statistical analysis shows that the production of the different allomorphs of the diminutives by the children parallels the frequency in the input. Unlike the data from the other languages presented in the previous chapters, the Dutch children provide less evidence for productivity because the children use relatively few contrasts between diminutives and base forms, and base forms predominate.

Chapter 8, 'Diminutives and hypocoristics in Austrian German (AG)', by Katharina Korecky-Kröll & Wolfgang U. Dressler, examines the course of acquisition of diminutives in two children. The Austrian children use relatively few diminutives, and these are not among the earliest morphological forms acquired. Instead, diminutives appear at the same time as other inflectional and derivational morphology. The data reveal considerable differences between the two children and from recording to recording, which suggests that the use of diminutives in both child speech and the input is influenced by discourse topic and context as well as by other factors. As with the other languages, the diminutives are first used with a pragmatic function of intimacy and affection. For the diminutives that the children use, productivity rather than frequency appears to be driving the children's selection of diminutives. In contrast to some of the other languages studied, the characteristics of diminutives in Austrian German do not facilitate the acquisition of noun paradigms.

Péter Bodor & Virág Barcza's chapter, 'Acquisition of diminutives in Hungarian', analyzes data from two children. Both children studied used relatively few diminutives when compared to the children in some of the other languages. The frequency of the diminutives in child speech appears to correlate with the frequency with which the children were exposed to them, while productivity did not seem to play as large a role in the order of acquisition. Both children used unproductive and productive suffixes, and the most productive suffix was produced significantly later than the unproductive suffixes. Once again, variation between the children within this single language was noted. As in the other languages studied, diminutives serve to express intimacy and an emotional relationship.

Chapter 10, 'Diminutives in Finnish child-directed and child speech', by Klaus Laalo, presents data from two siblings acquiring Finnish. The use of diminutives varies considerably from session to session and between the two children. Once again, the pragmatic functions of intimacy and familiarity were the primary meanings used. The author notes that diminutive

formation in Finnish can aid the acquisition of noun paradigms because the diminutive process creates more transparent stems.

Chapter 11 is the last chapter examining longitudinal data. In this chapter, 'The (scarcity) of diminutives in Turkish child language', F. Nihan Ketrez & Ayhan Akus-Koç analyze data from a single Turkish child. The authors find that diminutives occur infrequently, and only a few of the diminutive possibilities are used. The authors attribute their findings to the low number of diminutives in the input, the increased complexity of diminutives, and the fact that diminutives do not aid in the acquisition of stress or morphology, given the already transparent morphological system of Turkish.

The final two chapters in the book present experimental studies of diminutives. Chapter 12, 'Acquiring diminutive structures and meaning in Hebrew', by Anat Hora, Galit Ben-Zvi, Ronit Levie & Dorit Ravid, examines the acquisition of conventional derivational forms in school-aged Hebrew-speaking children. Children aged five to thirteen, as well as adult controls, were asked to both produce and explain conventional diminutives. Results showed that conventional derivational terms are acquired late, contrasting with the simpler juvenile diminutive forms.

Chapter 13, 'Diminutives provide multiple benefits for language acquisition', by Vera Kempe, Patricia J. Brooks & Steven Gillis, examines the role that diminutive morphology can play in the acquisition of morphology and word segmentation, using data from English-speaking adults. This chapter reports on earlier work investigating the ability of adult English speakers to use diminutive morphology in Dutch for the segmentation of speech, and to use diminutives in Russian for acquiring gender-marking patterns. Diminutive morphology can aid both processes. The chapter concludes with a discussion of the role of diminutives in language acquisition. As such, this chapter provides a transition from investigations of individual languages to a broader view of the function that diminutives can play in acquisition in general.

The editors' 'Conclusions' present a summary of the findings from the individual articles and an overview of conclusions that can be drawn. Among the major findings are that diminutive morphology is the first pattern of word formation to emerge in many languages, primarily for pragmatic reasons, and that the frequency of diminutive use decreases over time. Variation in the frequency of diminutives is considerable, across both languages and individuals. The pragmatic functions of diminutives are acquired very early, which strongly suggests that some pragmatic strategies can emerge in the first three years. The chapter also examines the debate on the question of whether the acquisition of morphology is item-based or rule-based and concludes that, while initial items appear to be learned item by item, many languages provide clear evidence for a rule-based application of diminutive morphology. Interestingly, the evidence varies by language: Finnish, Italian and Spanish support rule-based acquisition, whereas Greek

and Russian seem to support item-based acquisition. The editors suggest that morphological rules are used for bootstrapping in languages where the language uses unproductive or opaque bases, but not in languages where diminutive and base are both part of productive classes or where the diminutive might obscure the class. The authors conclude with a caution that it is not possible to draw far-reaching generalizations because of the small number of children analyzed per language.

Taken together, the chapters provide a thorough overview of the structure of diminutives in the adult language, their use in child and child-directed speech and the course of development of diminutives in a range of typologically different languages. Comparison of the longitudinal data across the different languages is facilitated by the chapters' parallel structure. However, the chapters are variable in several aspects, some of which detract from the coherence of the volume. Few of the chapters give a general overall picture of the children's development, either by stage or by size of lexicon. The figures and tables are at times difficult to decode because of the sheer volume of detail as well as differences in the formatting of the figures. The chapters also vary in the amount of theory included in the framing or discussion of the data. Similarly, few chapters give statistical analyses, even though many note the parallelism between the child and adult use of diminutives and changes over time. The editors allude to statistical results for Croatian, Hungarian, Italian and Lithuanian that suggest a shift toward diminutive forms for unproductive inflection classes. Unfortunately, neither the Croatian nor the Hungarian chapter presents the statistical analyses that these conclusions are based on.

While the individual chapters are variable in terms of methodology, theory or data presentation, all provide richly detailed data and numerous examples of the acquisition of diminutives. The introduction and conclusion by the editors help frame the larger picture, in terms of both the role that diminutives can play in acquisition and the theoretical implications. This volume will be of considerable interest to those studying early morphological development, and its value is perhaps best summed up in the following quote from Kempe, Brooks & Gillis's chapter:

[D]iminutives provide a unique window into the interaction of affective, pragmatic, structural and statistical features of CDS [child-directed speech], and the way the interaction between adult and child fosters the development of linguistic and communicative abilities. (337)

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Marina Stoyanova, *Unique focus: Languages without multiple wh-questions* (Linguistik Aktuell/Linguistics Today 123). Amsterdam & Philadelphia: John Benjamins, 2008. Pp. vii + 184.

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This monograph, based on the author's doctoral dissertation, is a comparative investigation of the lack of multiple *wh*-questions in four unrelated languages, Somali, Berber, Italian and Irish. It aims at providing a typological specification of languages that do not license multiple *wh*-questions within the typological system developed for languages that do. In this aim, the investigation starts from an overview of the strategies employed by multiple *wh*-question languages (i.e. multiple *wh*-fronting, multiple *wh*-in-situ, a mixture of both) and relates them to the strategy of question formation employed by non-multiple *wh*-question languages, viz. single *wh*-fronting. The questions addressed are the following:

1. Why do languages without multiple *wh*-questions not allow for a mixed system, e.g. fronting one *wh*-element and leaving the other one in situ?
2. Why is multiple *wh*-fronting not an option either?

The analysis that the author provides is based on the parallel behaviour displayed by *wh*-questions and focusing constructions: in both cases, the fronted element is adjacent to a head with specific properties. This requirement is captured by the 'Head-Adjacency Generalisation'; together with the 'Uniqueness Hypothesis', which states, roughly, that there is a unique position in which both *wh*- and focus phrases are licensed, it accounts for the behaviour of non-multiple *wh*-question languages. Let us now turn to the organisation of the monograph.

The aim and structure of the book are presented in chapter 1, 'Introduction', which lays out the research questions, discusses their relevance and interest for current research, and devotes a brief section to highlighting salient points of the theoretical programme adopted, Chomsky's Minimalism. This is followed by an evaluation of three generative accounts of *wh*-questions, which make use of (i) clausal typing (Cheng 1997), (ii) the parallel behaviour of *wh*-questions and focus constructions (e.g. Rizzi 1991),