Ling 417—Lecture II (Chapter 5) Overview of Early Syntax

Stages of INFLection

Non-Adultlike stage

Lexical stage-1

Adultlike stage

Functional stage-2

0. Syntax/INFL

0.1 Lexical ‘Noun/Verb’

NP | VP
---|---
N  | V
Car| go

0. 2 Functional Determiner [D=>N]

Auxiliary [Aux=>V]

NP | VP
---|---
D  | N  | Aux | V
The| car| {s}  | go-es

DP Features: [+/-Def] TP Features: [Agr]

[+/-Nom] (subject-verb)

[Person] [Tense]

[+/-Number] [+/-Past]

Lexical words provide substantive material/meaning. Functional words provide abstract grammar:

Summary of stage: Non-INFL stage:

No Tense/Number/Agreement/Case

Summary of stage: onset of INFL,

Tense/number/Agreement/Case

1. Lexical vs. Functional Categories

1.1 Non-adultlike INFL : Lexical stage-1

Children (18-30m) at the Lexical stage-1 employ

Nouns (Adjectives) and Verbs (Adverbs).

Stage-1 intermediate stage

[-Inflection] Verb Phrase (VP)

Examples: Baby have bottle.

Car go. Him play.

Optional INFL

Structure: [S [NP Car] [VP go]]

[-AGR] S [-INFL]

N(P) V(P)

a. Car go

b. Him play

1.2 Adultlike INFL: Functional stage-2

Children (36m+) at the Functional stage-2 employ Determiners and Auxiliaries.

Stage-2

[+Inflection] Tense Phrase (TP)

Examples: The baby has a bottle.

The car goes. He plays.

Structure: [S [DP The car] [TP goes]]

S [+INFL] [+AGR]

N(P) V(P)

DP TP

D N Aux V

a. The car {s} go-es

b. He play-s
Structure: [S [NP Baby] [VP have bottle]] [S [DP The baby] [TP has a bottle]]

2.1 Number
Stage-1/ No Number

NP two car, two plane, more boy

3.1 Wh-Question/No Aux
No Aux Invert

Stage-1 Intermediate stage

What daddy doing? What daddy is doing? What is daddy doing?

4.1 Negation/Neg initial
Internal Neg/No Aux

Stage-1 Intermediate Stage

No me like bottle. Me/I no like bottle.

4.2 Negation/[Aux+not]

Stage-2

No daddy have Barbar. Daddy doesn’t have Barbar

5. The nature of stage-1: Accounts

5.1 Thematic Stage-1 (p. 195) Grammar is based on semantics: Derivational morphology may be used as it is processed as a word chunk (e.g., teacher). Inflectional morphology on the other hand may not project at stage-1.

agent+action (Daddy sit) S

action+object (drive car)

5.2 Lexical stage-1 (p. 217)

Grammar is based on lexical categories: N(Adj), V(Adv), Prep.

5.3 Brain Maturation: (p. 53) Stage-1 grammar may be without full operation of Broca’s area which is said to be responsible for syntax.
Notes: Lecture II: Syntax

1. Nature of Errors:
   
a) Lexical mix-ups: The car is driving

   The drive is caring

   @ The driving is car.

   Rat-eater-s (Stem+Der-INFL/Gordon)

   @ Rat-s-eater

   b) Case Pronouns: Me do it. (Acc Default)

   @ Mommy kiss I.

   Me playing car. (Acc Default/-Finite)

   @ Me am playing car.

   c) Deletion: /s/ Sally wear-s strange sock-s (Sally Exp).

   Sally, Dance (/s/ doesn’t delete)

2. Nature of complexity:

   The/A number of students is/are dropping [Def => number]

   S V x

   John knows [me to tell the truth] (Acc/-Fin]

   John knows [I tell the truth]

   She talks to the director (Tense/AGR)

   I suggest [she talk to the director]

   DP: Def, Case, Person, Number

   DP

   / \

   N

   AUX: Tense/AGR

   TP

   / \

   Aux V

3. Sentence Structure Show INFL