

4;0-5;6 Year-Old Turkish Children's Usages of Event Types

Gökhan Ari

Aksaray University/ Aksaray, Turkey

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ABSTRACT

While language development emerges together with cognitive development, cognitive development is quicker than language acquisition. In another words perception develops before production in language acquisition process. In this study the kinds of verbs children produce will be analyzed, while they retelling the cartoons shown so that it will be determined that the reflection of perception into production of utterance in terms of verbal kinds and verbal diversity.

According to Langacker (1987a) and Smith (1983) there are a number of conceptual differences between acts and states (Frawley, 1992). States are static, with no dynamics and no internal structure whereas acts have physical or mental motion, dynamics and sometimes internal structure. Acts are categorized as activities, accomplishments, achievements and semelfactives (Smith, 1991).

This study is aimed to assess the usages of states and activity types of verbs in the narratives by the children whose mother tongue is Turkish. It's known that each six-month-period is important and has distinctive features in language acquisition and production. So 8 subjects were randomly-selected from 4;0-5;6 years of age preschool children whose mother tongue is Turkish. The study is mainly based on direct observation, content analysis and statistical analysis. Subjects watched three cartoons of Tom and Jerry and then were asked the question "What is happening in these cartoons?" Narrative data were transcribed and compiled using Microsoft Excel 6.0 and then all event types were analysed and categorised as activities and states according to Smith's classification (1991).

Major findings are as follows:

- The children's age is parallel to the number of events and event diversity.
- The children used activities more than states depending on both the cartoons' having patterns of motion and children's generally acquiring acts before states due to the utterance time.