

EDITORIAL INTRODUCTION

In September 1998 a group of about 25 psycholinguists gathered in Kazimierz Dolny, a little town at the right bank of the Vistula river (Poland). They came from 9 countries from over the whole world, from Georgia and the United States. The topic of the conference was *Children's discourse from a narrative perspective*, with particular reference to action and consciousness in story construction.

The conference followed a very intense schedule, but allowed, at the same time, for a lot of personal interaction during dinners and Polish feasts, and even some visiting of the attractive town with its artists, its memorable monastery and gardens, and Góra Trzech Krzyży (the three crosses hill). But most of all I remember a group of people who took work during the conference very seriously, who were very willing to listen to each other's ideas and presentations on discourse, and were open on all subjects, even if not necessarily treated within the same scientific framework.

The sense of a successful conference was shared by all the participants, and it was decided to dedicate two volumes of the present journal to papers of the conference. I was asked to "guest edit" this volume on *Process and structure of narrative discourse across languages*. I've heard the papers when presented, seen the first drafts and am now presenting the final versions to you. And I am just as convinced about the high quality of the conference now as I was when we left Kazimierz on the 21st of September. Where the tourist office says about Kazimierz: *Kto by³ raz, powracaæ będzie zawsze* (who was here once will always be coming back), I would be tempted to say: who participated in the *first* international conference on Children's Discourse from a Narrative Perspective, will surely be coming back for the *second* one! I hope that you, as a reader, will find as much pleasure in reading these articles as the participants found in writing them up. In the following, I will shortly introduce you to the various papers in this volume and then leave you to start reading. All the papers are concerned with the process and structure of narratives in one way or another: Albanese worries about the processing and comprehension of stories as a function of the input mode; Batoréo discusses the structuring of the information flow in children's discourse; Sousa deals with the structuring of discourse through temporal adverbs; Hendriks attempts to determine what kind of capacities (universal vs. language-specific) are needed to structure discourse and how these capacities are represented in adult vs. child learners; Imedadze and Shartava discuss the spatial structuring of narratives; Küntay dis-

cusses the productions of narratives by children in different elicitation conditions, and shows how children use linguistic means to structure their discourse according to different contextual needs; Kowal, by looking at the repairs used by 9- to 15-year-olds shows us how children continue learning how to structure discourse according to adult norms, including ever more of these norms, such as perspective taking, etc.; and finally Kyuchukov, by looking at error patterns, tries to get an insight into children's processing of Bulgarian as a second language.

Ottavia Albanese presents a study in which teacher's story-telling input is directly linked to children's story-telling output. She analyzes if and how teachers' different storytelling styles (narrative style vs. dialogue style) help children's story comprehension, processing and reconstruction. Albanese shows, first of all, that when children have been told the story in the dialogue style, which involves using questions that require the children's active participation during the narration of the story events, they have a better and more complete recall than when they have heard the same story in the narrative style. Secondly, she tests what types of questions and what frequency of questions is more advantageous for the child's recollection of the story. Results show that the use of a combination of so-called encyclopaedic questions, verification questions, personal questions and requests for inferences ensures the best processing of the story by the child listener.

Hanna Jakubowicz Batoréo, in her paper on children's discourse in European Portuguese narratives, looks at the linguistic means for introducing referents in discourse. In qualifying different introductory devices, Batoréo stresses the fact that there seems to be an obvious relation between existence and location, in that claiming that an entity is at a certain location implies a claim that the entity exists. Batoréo hypothesizes that 6-7 is the key age for learning how to mark referent introductions. The hypothesis is based on previous work in which she has shown that significant changes at the cognitive and linguistic levels take place in that age group. However, although children do at this age start to reorganize discourse according to adult strategies, children continue to have serious difficulties in introducing and maintaining reference in discourse up to 7 and even 10 years of age. As Batoréo argues, children have all the morphosyntactic and lexical means at their disposal from 5 years onwards, but cannot yet use these means in the adult-like manner.

Otília da Costa e Sousa is concerned with the role played by adverbials in the construction of temporal reference in children's narratives. She analyzes the use of the markers *quando* (when), *então* (then), and *depois* (after) within the Culioli framework. In this framework, the above three markers are considered temporal localization operators in texts. One of the functions of temporal adverbs is to localize the events in the narrative on a detached plane, that is, detached from the here and now. The so-called break value of these elements is stressed by Sousa for those cases. Another function of temporal adverbs is to combine progress and continuity of the events. With respect to these functions, Sousa stresses the overmarking in the corpus by *então* and *depois*. She claims that this overmarking must be linked to an incipient textual organization, to a preponderance of paratactic organization, and to a constant concern with the marking of continuity. As has been shown by earlier researchers, Sousa notes

that a lot of occurrences of temporal adverbs do not have a clear referential function, but seem to mark temporal progress of the story-telling itself rather than of the story line. Finally, Sousa stresses the importance of the existence of temporal adverbs to mark off reality from story events, which allows children to leave the story events behind, through a clear linguistic marking of the border between the two worlds.

Henriëtte Hendriks compares children's discourse with that of 2nd language learners. She argues that different capacities are available in adult learners (possibly universal discourse pragmatic organization capacities, but not necessarily a good capacity to acquire new target language forms) vs. child learners (capacity to learn linguistic means, but not necessarily all the functions that go with the forms). She shows that insofar as the acquisition of inflections for the marking of tense and aspect is concerned, child learners easily tune into the target language system using target forms for target functions from 4 years onward, whereas adult learners, when finally acquiring target forms, map them onto source language functions. However, insofar as the acquisition of adverbials is concerned, adult L2 learners seem, first of all, to pick these forms up at an earlier stage in development and, secondly, use these devices only when marking a disruption of the principle of natural order. Children, on the other hand, use adverbials in a seemingly redundant way (cf. also da Costa e Sousa) to mark the regular sequence of events, a sequence that is already marked, by default, through the principle of natural order.

Natela Imedadze and Lia Shartava studied motion verbs in Georgian children's narratives. The paper is interesting from both a language descriptive point of view and from an acquisition point of view. Using Talmy's framework for the classification of motion verbs, Imedadze and Shartava describe Georgian as expressing manner and motion in the verb stem. Path of motion in Georgian is typically expressed by so-called pre-verbs. The number of pre-verbs that express direction and orientation (towards or away from the speaker) is restricted. Path can also be expressed by adverbs and postpositions. Georgian also disposes of linguistic means that allow the speaker to place himself within the narrative, as a kind of online spectator of the events, or as narrator only. Although Georgian belongs to the same group as English and German, the number of verb-roots used by children to express manner and motion is clearly lower than in English and German. Tenses are also different depending on the language. Thus, most Frog stories in German are told in the present tense, in Georgian in the past tense. This tense allows for a larger diversity of pre-verbs to be used which may explain the phenomenon. Georgian children also know very well how to shift perspectives from being "in" the story to being the narrator of the story. Imedadze and Shartava conclude that children from very early on tune into their language, acquiring the means most prevalent in their own language.

Iwona Kowal analyzed false starts and self-repairs in narratives to see what these tell us about narrative structure. She coded all repairs in Frog stories from 64 subjects 9/10-, 12- and 15-year-olds. Her main interest was not with repairs following a linguistic error (lexical, grammatical, or other) but rather with those repairs that concern changes in narrative structure. These are clearly not error repairs, but rather, appropriateness repairs. In these cases the speaker modifies something, not because it was erroneous, but

because he or she wants to achieve an ideal delivery. A total of 124 self-repairs that caused changes in narrative structure were divided into 7 categories. Each type occurred in all age groups. However, very few of those repairs ever occur in the adult control group! Finer analyses showed that *changes in perspective* rose considerably from 9-10-year-olds to 12- and 15-year-olds. Kowal explains this difference by the fact that 9- and 10-year-olds construct a simpler story altogether, whereas 12- and 15-year-olds strive for a more sophisticated and mature text, which, however, often fails the first time. Skills in changing perspective and hierarchically sorting the presented events requires fluency in the use of voice of verb, subordinations, and nonfinite verb forms like gerunds and participles, all means that are acquired relatively late. These data thus show us how language acquisition continues into the teenage years.

Aylin Küntay studied how children introduce new referents into discourse. Instead of using the more commonly used picture-based story-telling tasks, she uses lists and personal narratives children produced naturally in unelicited situations. Küntay uses these data, assuming that earlier findings based on picture-based story-telling data are influenced by the fact that they are elicited by an adult interlocutor who can therefore be assumed to know the pictures already, and by the mere presence of the pictures itself. Or children can always assume some knowledge to rest with the adult, which might make them less careful about the forms used for introduction and maintenance of referents. Küntay's results show that in naturally occurring conversational lists and narratives, children indeed do use presentational constructions to mark newness. Thus, preschool children seem to display competent strategies that respect the indefinite status of newly introduced referents when they feel it is contextually necessary. In this article Küntay stresses the fact that different pressures are exerted by various discourse contexts and narrative situations, and warns the researcher to not come to hasty conclusions on the basis of only one type of data.

Finally, the short contribution by Hristo Kyuchukov informs us about work in progress on the bilingual status of Turkish and Gypsy (Roma) children living in Bulgaria and learning Bulgarian as their second language. The aim of this study is of a sociolinguistic kind. The author would like to come up with solutions for a more appropriate way of teaching Bulgarian as an L2, paying attention to the specific problems these children have. Kyuchukov started with an analysis of speech errors of the children, in order to get a clear idea of where exactly their problems lie. Results show that they are mainly found in L1 transfer (lexical, but also grammatical) and in overgeneralizations of rules of the Bulgarian language, leading to inappropriate utterances.

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