

New Developments in the Acquisition of Dutch

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Preface

The six papers in this special GAGL volume form the collective output of studies that have been undertaken in the context of a large European collaboration. The research was part of the EU-funded COST A33 project “Crosslinguistically Robust Stages of Children’s Linguistic Performance, with Applications to the Diagnosis of Specific Language Impairment” (chair Uli Sauerland, vice-chair Heather van der Lely, 2006-2010).¹ Researchers from twenty-five European countries participated. The goal was to provide a cross-linguistically uniform picture of 5-year-olds’ knowledge of grammar, which can serve as the basis for further research into clinical markers for the detection of SLI. The COST research themes include pronouns, quantification, implicatures, passives, tense and aspect, and questions.

Five papers in this volume present the results from equally many COST experiments carried out with Dutch five-year-olds. As such, they present the state of the art of new developments in the L1 acquisition of Dutch. The research themes are: the production of dummy verb *gaan* ‘go’ instead of tensed verbs (van Koert et al.); the production of the Dutch quantitative pronoun *er* (Berends et al.); a comparison of object pronouns and quantitative *er* (Veenstra et al.); the processing of wh-questions (Metz et al.); comprehension of scalar implicatures (Faber et al.). The sixth paper investigates the production and comprehension of tense in French (van Maastricht & Hollebrandse).

The Groningen COST team involved two senior researchers, Bart Hollebrandse and Angeliek van Hout, and a team of ten dedicated graduate students and student assistants. Those who participated in the write-up of the papers appear as authors: Sanne Berends, Myrthe Faber, Margreet van Koert, Lieke van Maastricht, Marijke Metz, Jessica Overweg, Alma Veenstra. We thank the others for their collaboration: Judith van Dijk, Rika Plat and Maaïke Veninga.

All papers have been presented at the Acquisition Lab at the University of Groningen, often as try-out talks for conferences. We thank the members of the Lab, regular as well as irregular ones, for their supportive input, comments and questions. The work has been presented at a number of national and international venues, in chronological order: COST A33 Final Conference *Let the children speak*, London (2010); TiN dag, Utrecht University (2010 and 2011); Workshop on *Auxiliaries in (a)typical first and second language acquisition*, Radboud University of Nijmegen (2010); *GALANA 4 conference*, University of Toronto (2010); *GALA 10 conference*, University of Thessaloniki (2011). Four articles are in publication, see Bibliography.

Furthermore, the students made several trips abroad. Half of them attended the one-week COST *Training School in Language Acquisition Methods* at ZAS (Zentrum für Allgemeine Sprachwissenschaft) in Berlin (2009). And three went on a so-called short term mission (STSM) for a research stay with our international COST colleagues.

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Angeliek van Hout, December 2011

Notes

1. <http://www.zas.gwz-berlin.de/index.php?id=47&L=1>

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