

The emergence and development of compounds in young children's speech production

Kjærbæk, Laila; Basbøll, Hans

Publication date:
2017

Document version:
Indsendt manuskript

Citation for polished version (APA):
Kjærbæk, L., & Basbøll, H. (2017). *The emergence and development of compounds in young children's speech production*. Abstract fra 2nd International Symposium on Monolingual and Bilingual Speech, Chania, Grækenland.

Go to publication entry in University of Southern Denmark's Research Portal

Terms of use

This work is brought to you by the University of Southern Denmark.
Unless otherwise specified it has been shared according to the terms for self-archiving.
If no other license is stated, these terms apply:

- You may download this work for personal use only.
- You may not further distribute the material or use it for any profit-making activity or commercial gain
- You may freely distribute the URL identifying this open access version

If you believe that this document breaches copyright please contact us providing details and we will investigate your claim.
Please direct all enquiries to puresupport@bib.sdu.dk

The emergence and development of compounds in young children's speech production

Laila Kjærbaek
University of Southern Denmark
kjarbak@sdu.dk

Hans Basbøll
University of Southern Denmark
hba@sdu.dk

Keywords: compounds, Danish, first language acquisition, morphology, prosody, speech production, word formation

Compounding is extremely productive in Danish, with regard to both conventional and more innovative compounds. This applies to nouns in particular, and somewhat to adjectives and verbs (Bauer 2011). The present study investigates the emergence and development of compound nouns in a longitudinal corpus of naturalistic spontaneous child speech (CS) and child directed speech (CDS) of four Danish children and their families – from the first occurrence up to the age of 3;11.

Prosodically, Danish compounds are very complex, since Danish has the typical Germanic stress pattern for compounds (with stress gradation), and in addition the *stød* (a contrastive laryngeal syllable rhyme prosody with a complicated grammatical distribution). Since *stød* depends on the sonority shape of the syllables, and since there can be several *stød* in one word, Danish is prosodically even more complex than Swedish and Norwegian (which have tonal word accents in addition to the typical Germanic stress, but lack the particular phonological restrictions of Danish).

The main research questions to be investigated are: How is the development of compound nouns in Danish children's language acquisition? Which parallels can be drawn to the children's language input? Do the children treat conventional and innovative compounds alike? How do the children pronounce the compounds, in particular with respect to prosody?

The study shows that compound nouns start to emerge well before the age of 2 years. The number of compounds increases with age. The vast majority of compounds are endocentric noun+noun compounds, but all children also produce verb+noun and adjective+noun compounds. The development goes from prototypical to more complex compounds. In general we see very much the same picture in CS as in CDS. During the first months of acquisition, the children do not show any signs of composition or decomposition of compounds, i.e. the compounds seem to be rote-learned in the early stages. Since the children (almost) never swap elements, it could be considered an argument for the children not seeing the compounds as two elements. On the other hand, the children do produce innovative compounds, though they are not very frequent.

The study will furthermore explore the children's actual pronunciation of the compounds along with aspects of the interplay between CS and CDS as well as similarities and differences between the individual children.

References

Bauer (2011 [1st edn. 2009]). IE, Germanic: Danish. In *The Oxford Handbook of Compounding*. Lieber & Štekauer (eds.), 400-416. Oxford: Oxford University Press.