



Stockholms  
universitet

Centrum för tvåspråkighetsforskning

## Högre seminarium/doktorandseminarium i tvåspråkighetsforskning

Tisdag 14 maj kl. 15.00–16.30 i rum C512

**Tatiana Antonchik**

[tatiana.antontchik@biling.su.se](mailto:tatiana.antontchik@biling.su.se)

### *A corpus-based study of the L2-acquisition of the Swedish nominal compounding: Modifying constituents of nominal compounds in L1 and L2 acquisition*

**Abstract:** Some important facets of the language-particular structural knowledge involved in comprehension and production of compound nouns are knowledge of constraints on lexical categories that can be used as input, and the form of the initial modifying constituent as well as possible linking elements occurring between the constituents.

Observation of constraints on the form of the initial, modifying constituent of compound nouns has been one of the most investigated aspects of both L1 and L2 acquisition of compounding during the last three decades. A number of experimental studies have examined children's observation of constraints on pluralisation – mainly – in English, often with a view to prove or disprove the validity of the level-ordering structural analyses (e.g. Gordon, 1985; Clahsen et al., 1995; Alegre and Gordon, 1996; Nicoladis & Murphy, 2004; Nicoladis, 2005). This issue has also motivated a majority of compounding studies in SLA over the same recent period (e.g. Lardiere, 1995; Murphy, 2000; Agathopoulou, 2003). In line with the level-ordering model (Kiparsky, 1982), these constraints extend to all kinds of regular inflections, which occupy the level above all other morphological processes, including compounding, and hence, as predicted by the model, can impossibly be used as input in the latter. In Swedish it entails the ungrammaticality of (1) affixed definite articles on nouns as well as the ungrammaticality of (2) inflections on verbs and adjectives used as initial modifying elements of compounds. Violation of the first shows up occasionally in the L2 but not in the L1 acquisition (as demonstrated by the data used in the present study and Mellenius (1997) respectively). The violations of the two latter constraints are more common in children's spontaneous speech than in L2 learners' production.

In some Germanic languages, such as Dutch and Swedish, acquisition of the constraints on inflections within compounds interacts with language-specific lexical knowledge of various linking, or "liaison", elements of the modifying constituents. The most problematic in this regard in both L1

and L2 acquisition of Swedish are modifying nouns. Both experimental and observational studies have pointed to children's surprisingly early mastery over "liaison" forms requiring deletion of the final vowel – acquired prior to addition of -s, while the L2 data indicate an almost directly reverse order of acquisition of these modifications.

What other structural similarities and differences are there in the L1 and L2 acquisition of compounding in Swedish that can be traced using the data in the ASU Corpus, and what are the most appropriate methods of further dealing with the compiled material? These are the questions that I'd like to discuss at the seminar.

### References:

- Agathopoulou, E. (2003). On functional features in second language acquisition of nominal compounds: Evidence from the Greek-English interlanguage. In Proceedings of the 6<sup>th</sup> Generative Approaches to Second Language Acquisition Conference (pp. 1-8).
- Alegre, M. A., & Gordon, P. (1996). Red rats eater exposes recursion in children's word formation. *Cognition*, 60(1), 65-82.
- Berman, R. A. (2009). Children's acquisition of compound constructions. In *The Oxford Handbook of Compounding*, R. Lieber and P. Štekauer (eds.), 298-322.
- Clahsen, H., Marcus, G., Bartke, S., & Wiese, R. (1995). Compounding and inflection in German child language. *Yearbook of morphology*, 1995, 115-142.
- Gordon, P. (1985). Level-ordering in lexical development. *Cognition*, 21(2), 73-93.
- Kiparsky, P. (1982). From cyclic phonology to lexical phonology. In H. van der Hulst and N. Smith (eds.), *The structure of phonological representations*, 1, 131-175.
- Lardiere, D. (1995). L2 acquisition of English synthetic compounding is not constrained by level-ordering (and neither, probably, is L1). *Second Language Research*, 11(1), 20-56.
- Mellenius, I. (1997). *The acquisition of nominal compounding in Swedish* (Vol. 31). Lund University Press.
- Murphy, V. A. (2000). Compounding and the representation of L2 inflectional morphology. *Language Learning*, 50(1), 153-197.
- Nicoladis, E. (2005). When level-ordering is not used in the formation of English compounds. *First Language*, 25(3), 331-346.
- Nicoladis, E., & Murphy, V. A. (2004). Level-ordering does not constrain children's ungrammatical compounds. *Brain and language*, 90(1), 487-494.
- The ASU Corpus, Department of Linguistics, Stockholm University.

Vi önskar alla hjärtligt välkomna till seminariet och till postseminarium efteråt i C585!

Kari Fraurud