

### **AG 3: Production-comprehension asymmetries in child language**

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It is a widely held assumption that children develop receptive skills before productive ones. For example, 16 months-old children produce 45 words but understand approximately 180 words (Fenson et al., 1993 for English). Several recent studies, however, provide evidence that preschool children use structures in a target-like way without assigning them an adult-like interpretation (such as focus particles, anaphora, complementizers, or contrast accent). At first glance, these latter findings are surprising, because target-like production requires mastery of the relevant grammatical structure. Taken together, both sets of findings suggest that language is acquired within a circle where comprehension precedes production and production precedes comprehension. Moreover, these results call for a reconsideration of the notions 'comprehension' and 'production' in language acquisition research.

In our workshop, we aim to (re)consider the comprehension-production asymmetries in child language from theoretical and methodological perspectives. We would focus on comprehension because it is central for both comprehension (e.g., true value judgements) and production tasks (e.g., sentence completion). Questions related to the topic of the workshop are for example:

- Is there further evidence for or against a comprehension-production-asymmetry?
- Which theoretical models can account for the empirical findings?
- Could the earlier mastery of comprehension skills be an artefact of research methods?
- How can 'comprehension' and 'production' be redefined to capture the observed asymmetries?

We invite contributions investigating monolingual, bilingual, and impaired language development, and we explicitly welcome research comparing comprehension and production skills in the same subjects. As the workshop aims at bringing together researchers from experimental and theoretical linguistics, we particularly welcome contributions that build a bridge between empirical findings and linguistic theory.

#### **References:**

Fenson, Larry, Phillip S. Dale, Steven Reznick, Donna Thal, Elizabeth Bates, Jeffrey P. Hartung, Steven Pethick & Judy S. Reilly (1993). The MacArthur communicative development inventories: User's guide and technical manual. San Diego: Singular.