

Children's Acquisition of Variable Grammar

Child language research has traditionally focused on aspects of grammar that are fixed or invariant. For example, in English we say *I ate the apple*, but not *Ate I the apple* with the grammatical subject 'I' after the verb 'ate'. Yet many grammatical patterns are in fact variable. For example, in Spanish, subject pronouns can be expressed or omitted, e.g., *yo comí la manzana* ~ *comí la manzana* both mean '*I ate the apple*'

This talk presents research showing that development and the nature of the input, including the frequency of grammatical structures in child-directed speech. In addition, the role of grammatical variation in children is important for understanding a language, and she will argue that this approach is relevant for bilingual and bidialectal children's developing

Professor Naomi Shin

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morphosyntactic variation are acquired during childhood and how they change in situations of language contact. Her applied work has focused on developing a sociolinguistic approach to teaching Spanish grammar. She co-directs the Lobo Language Acquisition Lab. Dr. Shin has been invited for the relevance of her work to heritage language learners and those learning various Louisiana dialects, including but not limited to African American English, Cajun/Creole English, and Southern White English.

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