

Young children's acquisition of particles: What do particles do in Korean?

Jieun Kiaer and Naya Choi

In this talk, we are to discuss the acquisition of particles in Korean based on a two year olds' spontaneous corpus collected for a year by the second author. We use the term "*particle*" as an overarching, umbrella term which refers to (a single or sequence of) grammatical morpheme(s) that contains a syntactic, semantic and pragmatic meaning complex. Following Potts (2005) and its application to Korean particles in Kiaer (2007, 2014), we propose that the meaning complex that particles in Korean project is *multi-dimensional*. In particular, we focus on the *constructive* and *expressive* aspects of particles and provide a DS account (Cann et al 2005) to capture these dual facets of particles in Korean.

Step-by-step, incremental structure building remains puzzling in verb-final languages regardless of the growing evidence in psycholinguistic experiments. This is due to verb-oriented perspectives in theoretical syntax, where it has been assumed that verbs alone project combinatorial information. In this talk, based on young children's acquisition of particles, we propose that an incremental combination is possible due to the constructive roles of particles which function as both "builders" and "enders" in step-wise structuring. We argue that particles along with prosody and default word orders enable incremental structuring in languages like Korean where the verb comes at the end. In addition, we propose that particles in these languages provide a rich meaning complex, revealing a speaker's attitudes and interpersonal relations. Based on Potts' (2005) theory of expressive semantics, we argue that particles contain the package of a speaker's different attitudes, and hence, they are in principle expressive and modal. We also propose that particle behaviours in these languages show *interpersonal agreement* rather than *grammatical agreement* as in English-like Indo-European languages.