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Think of a number: learning to make nouns plural in second language acquisition

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Résumé

Dao (2007) found that Vietnamese speaking learners of English, produced plural-marking in numeric expressions before producing plural nouns alone. This runs counter to the predictions of Processability Theory (PT) (Pienemann, 1998, 2005, 2007; Pienemann et al., 2005). We use Levelt's (1989) Theory of Speaking as modelled in Weaver++ (Levelt, Roelofs & Meyer, 1999) to argue that an agreeing combination of a numeral and noun can be produced without feature unification, and thus is no more cognitively demanding than inflection of a single noun, and that the cognitive framework of Vietnamese, a classifier language, facilitates production of the plural suffix in a numeric context, but not on a noun used alone. In other words, early production of plural agreement is facilitated by a form of conceptual transfer (Jarvis, 2011).

Notes de la rédaction

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