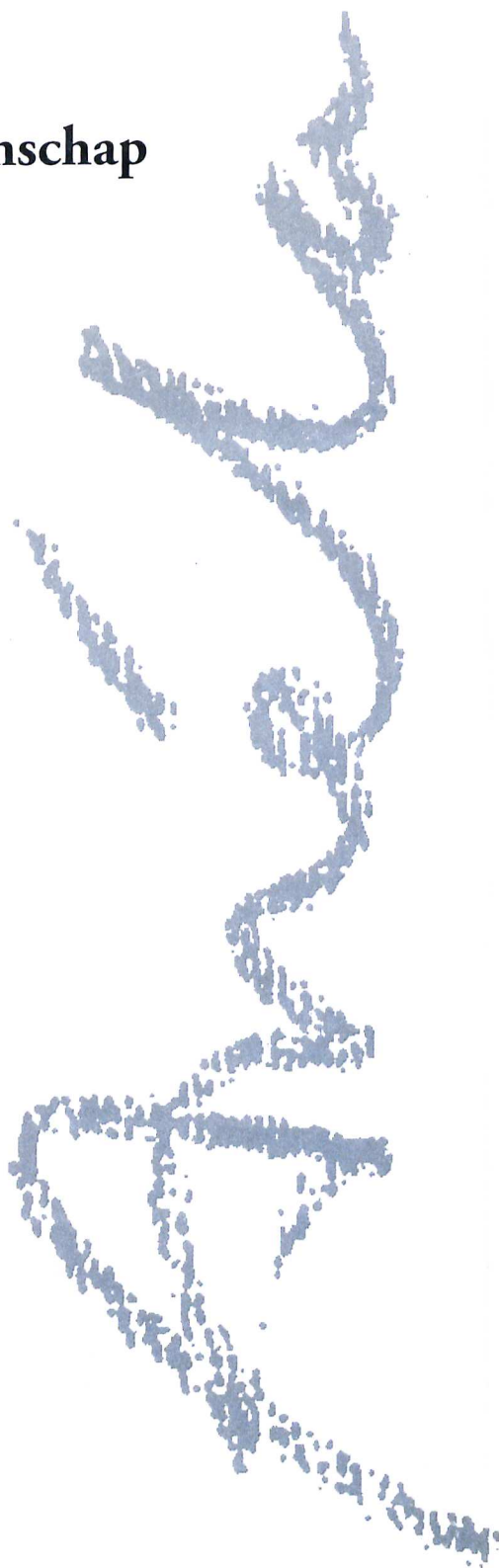


Toegepaste Taalwetenschap in Artikelen 77

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THE EXPRESSION OF SIMULTANEITY IN L1 DUTCH¹

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1 *Introduction*

It is a fact that languages express temporal relations, and that people do so linguistically under various circumstances and in various manners. It is also well-known that languages resort to different means to express temporality; i.e. grammatical and lexical linguistic devices. The two main types of temporal relations that languages can convey are simultaneity and sequentiality. Though the latter temporal relation has been documented in the literature for expression and acquisition in many languages, the former temporal relation (i.e. simultaneity) has not been a field of extensive research. Both temporal relations, however, yield excellent opportunities for cross-linguistic comparisons and typological work in the areas of both grammar and the lexicon, since both temporal relations are assumed to be universal concepts.

There has only been a small amount of work on the (acquisition of) the expression of simultaneity in the past. First language research focused on the expression of simultaneity in German, Turkish (Aksu-Koç & Von Stutterheim, 1994) and Thai (Winskel, 2003), but most of the previous studies are concerned with the English language (e.g. Clark, 1971; Munro & Wales, 1982). Second language research focused on the expression of simultaneity in Czech, German and English (Schmiedtová, 2004).

In the present paper, we focus on the expression of simultaneity in Dutch. We investigate how adults and children convey simultaneity linguistically in their mother tongue. Since simultaneity between two or more situations (i.e. events and/or states) is rarely marked explicitly in spontaneous discourse, we use an experimental set-up in which linguistic expressions of simultaneity are elicited. Our starting point is a study by Schmiedtová (2004) on the expression of simultaneity in Czech, German and English. She found out that for languages which operate with grammatical aspect, such as English and Czech, native speakers employ aspectual devices for the expression of all types of simultaneity. Based on her study, we hypothesize that if a language expresses ongoingness grammatically (through e.g. the progressive or imperfective aspect), native speakers - adults as well children - will use this marker when expressing simultaneity. Given this background, it is of special research interest to investigate the Dutch

¹ We would like to thank the Max Planck Institute for Psycholinguistics in Nijmegen, the Netherlands, and Heather Winskel for their cooperation, as well as Christiane von Stutterheim and Mary Carroll and the three anonymous reviewers for their helpful comments.

language where a grammatical aspectual marker of ongoingness is evolving (see section 3.2), which poses a challenge to our hypothesis as stated above.

The present study shows how the grammar and the lexicon intertwine when linguistically referring to two events taking place at the same time. As predicted, it also provides insights into the *use* of the grammatical aspectual system of Dutch.

From a developmental point of view, relevant insights are obtained with regard to the use of linguistic means for expressing simultaneity in Dutch and with regard to children's abilities to link temporal events. In a nutshell, even young Dutch children use the grammatical aspectual marker for encoding simultaneous events. Furthermore, in contrast to several previous studies we demonstrate that children do not adhere to the Principle of Natural Order (PNO) at all stages of their development.

The structure of the paper is as follows: First, we focus on the concept of simultaneity and depict its types, then we briefly review some previous studies on simultaneity. This is followed by a description of the experimental methodology of this study and a summary of the results. These represent an overview of the linguistic devices for expressing simultaneity in Dutch, and the way these means are employed by Dutch children. Lastly, we provide a closer look at the children's production data with special attention to the development of children's capabilities to refer to the temporal structure of situations.

2 Defining simultaneity

The main problem that we come across when considering temporal simultaneity is that it is not always marked explicitly in spontaneous speech. A simultaneity of two or more events is often implied and, therefore, interpreted as such through pragmatic and extra-linguistic knowledge (Schmiedtová, 2004). Also, when attempting to find occurrences of simultaneity in natural speech one might be disappointed due to the excessive number of narrations, which follow the PNO (Labov, 1972). This well-known discourse principle claims that, unless stated otherwise, events are retold in the order in which they occurred; a chronological, and thus sequential, order. The predominance of this principle might explain why the default temporal interpretation of events in discourse is sequential. The deficiency of interest in temporal simultaneity in the field of language acquisition might also be caused by the fact that information organisation in discourse is hierarchically ordered: People might assume that the most *salient* temporal relation to be expressed linguistically is a sequential relation.

For all the above reasons it is useful to pursue experimental work aiming to *elicit* expressions of simultaneity. This reveals crucial insights with respect to the use of grammatical aspect (Schmiedtová, 2004) and also shows that there is an interplay between the employment of parts of the grammar and the lexicon. This holds true not only for the expression of simultaneity by adults but also in L1 development.

Let us now consider the types of simultaneity, which can be distinguished (types taken from Schmiedtová, 2004) with examples in Dutch (Table 1).

Table 1: Types of simultaneity

| Type | | Example |
|----------------------------|--------------------|--|
| Total simultaneity (TOTAL) | [-----] [-----] | Terwijl ik aan het typen ben, is Femke een wijntje aan het drinken 'While I am typing, Femke is having some wine' |
| Overlap (OVERLAP) | [-----] [-----] | Paul at zijn ontbijt op, terwijl Joep televisie ging kijken 'Paul ate up his breakfast, while Joep started watching television' |
| Inclusion (INCL) | [-----] [---] | Angeline was aan het lezen. Ondertussen viel Tim over een stapel boeken 'Angeline was reading. Meanwhile Tim tripped over a stack of books' |
| Initial Boundary (IB) | [-----] [---] | Toen Lotte begon te studeren, kocht haar vader een auto voor haar 'When Lotte started studying, her father bought her a car' |
| Final Boundary (FB) | [-----] [----] | Liesbeth keek televisie, totdat haar zoon wakker werd 'Liesbeth watched television until her son woke up' |

The above five types are applicable to the Dutch language as well as to the languages previously studied (i.e. Czech, German, English), and this framework appears to be exhaustive. It is plausible to assume that there is a gradation in the difficulty of expressing or comprehending these types for children. At first sight, the least complex depiction of simultaneity seems to be a *total* simultaneity of events: This type conveys a complete co-occurrence of both initial and final boundaries, as well as the time interval in between. There are only two changes of state (both initial and final boundaries) that need to be referred to in order to depict this temporal structure. More complex types seem to be inclusion and overlap: These consist of a larger number of reference points (indicated by the brackets in the above representations), which should necessarily be mentioned when accurately expressing these relations. It is likely that, for children, it is less cognitively demanding to deal with total simultaneity than with the other types. Therefore, it is important to take the above differentiation between simultaneity types into account when looking at acquisitional order. This hypothesis is not the main focus of the present paper, yet we briefly return to this issue in section 5. The next section provides a concise overview of some of the previous studies on the L1 acquisition of simultaneity with a special interest in Dutch.

3 Previous work on simultaneity and the role of grammatical aspect

3.1 Previous L1 studies

The main focus of previous work is on L1 learners of the English language (e.g. Clark, 1971; Keller-Cohen, 1974; Munro & Wales, 1982). Merely a small number of cross-

linguistic studies also take other languages into consideration, i.e. German, Turkish and Hebrew (Aksu-Koç & Von Stutterheim, 1994) and Thai and Lisu (Winskel, 2003).

In the English studies there is a focus on children's *comprehension* of the concept of simultaneity in comparison with the concept of sequentiality. Many studies conclude that it is sequentiality which is the easiest for children, although, when taking a closer look at their methodology and general research focus, a critical note is at place. Nearly all studies approach the comprehension of *lexical* means (temporal adverbials and connectives) denoting a simultaneity or a sequence as being synonymous to the comprehension of the *concepts* of simultaneity and sequence. Keller-Cohen (1974), for example, tests children's understanding of simultaneous situations on the basis of act-out tasks involving the words *at the same time* and *while*. In her conclusions, she claims that children have difficulties with the concept of simultaneity, rather than merely the lexical items they were tested on. She leaves out a crucial part of the possibilities for expressing simultaneity in English: The use of the progressive marker *-ing*. As Brown (1973) already points out, this marker is acquired relatively early by English children. Therefore, it might also be the case that expressions of temporality, which involve this marker, are *also* comprehended and/or produced early by children. In fact, Aksu-Koç & Von Stutterheim's study shows that English children as young as three and four years of age use *-ing* when referring to a simultaneity of events.

Besides the neglect of grammatical means for linguistically expressing simultaneity, it is also frequently disregarded that expressions of simultaneity are language-specific (this *is* acknowledged in Aksu-Koç & Von Stutterheim, 1994). Typological differences determine the range of possibilities for expressing simultaneity and, specifically, differences involving the feature +/- grammatical aspect are crucial. Schmiedtová (2004) provides evidence that grammatical aspect is of utmost importance for native speakers of aspect-dominant languages (e.g. English and Czech) when expressing simultaneity of events. In addition, these aspectual markers are also employed by L2 learners (of these languages) whose L1 grammar does not have grammatical aspect (in this case German). Furthermore, most previous studies do not distinguish between the different types of simultaneity and this probably also influences the findings concerning children's performance and/or comprehension of simultaneous situations.

So how about Dutch? It must be said that there are no studies, that we are aware of, which deal with simultaneity exclusively. Two studies, Aarssen (2001) and Bos (2001), deal with children's general development in producing temporal relations. Aarssen starts out with the assumption that Dutch has no morphological means for expressing simultaneity and that Dutch native speakers mainly rely on conjunctions and adverbs. His conclusions state that children do not express simultaneity very frequently. Again, this may be due to the lack of focusing on grammatical means and/or to the methodology (again the Frog story). Bos, on the other hand, does mention some grammatical possibilities to refer to simultaneity in Dutch (one of them is the *aan het*-construction, which will be the focus of this study, see section 3.2), but she is mainly concerned with the order of acquisition of temporal adverbials and connectives. Moreover, she claims that children adhere to the Principle of Natural Order in all their temporal retellings.

The current study challenges the above findings and claims that Dutch does have a grammatical aspectual marker available (3.2) and that this marker is used widely by adults and children when expressing simultaneity (5.1).

3.2 Grammatical aspect in Dutch

We observe that Dutch native speakers frequently use a grammatical marker (1) for encoding ongoingness².

- (1) Ik ben *aan het* koken
'I am cooking'

We hypothesize that this marker is in the process of grammaticalizing as progressive aspect³. Although different morphologically, it has a meaning which is identical to the meaning of the English progressive marker *-ing*. These two markers denote that both the initial and the final boundaries of situations are being defocused, thus rendering an interpretation of ongoingness. The meaning in example (1) is in opposition with the meaning of the simple form in the above context: This form (i.e. *I cook* and *Ik kook*) has an implied habitual meaning. Despite these similarities, there are differences between the Dutch and the English progressive markers. This is caused by the fact that, hypothetically, they are in different stages of the grammaticalization process (Schmiedtová & Flecken, in press). This means that for Dutch, the meaning-opposition between a form marked with the *aan het*-construction and a simple form is not always one between ongoingness and habituality. In Dutch it is not (yet?) possible to add this marker to any verb or situation type, which is to a large extent the case in English. Moreover, the meaning of the *aan het*-construction is more or less limited to ongoingness in the here-and-now, whereas this constraint is not effective in English. The Dutch marker is also addressed in Boogaart (1999), but its grammatical aspectual status is not acknowledged.

In section 5.1., we illustrate that this marker is crucial for the expression of simultaneity in Dutch, as is the English marker for simultaneity in English.

4 Methodology and analyses

The elicitation experiment that this study is based on is part of a larger, cross-linguistic project on temporal language acquisition by children, initiated by Heather Winskel from the University of Western Sydney⁴. The stimuli consist of sixteen animated clips, in which two events (either simultaneous or sequential) are depicted. These clips are presented to children and adults in randomized orders. We divide the stimuli into two groups, according to the verb types that would be elicited: Achievements and activities

² We are aware that there are other constructions to express this concept in Dutch, such as the verbal constructions *zitten te*, *liggen te*, *staan te*. We will not discuss these constructions, since our data show that they are not used systematically by all adults and children in the manner the *aan het*-construction is used.

³ By aspect we always refer to *grammatical* aspect, that is the relationship between the Topic Time, the time that is being talked about, and the Time of Situation, the time for which a statement about a situation holds (in line with Klein, 1994). This is opposed to the domain of *Aktionsart*, by which we mean inherent verbal semantics (again c.f. Klein (1994)).

⁴ Other participants in this project are the Max Planck Institute for Psycholinguistics, Nijmegen, the Netherlands, The Chinese University of Hongkong, Hongkong, Chulalongkorn University, Thailand. The languages under investigation are English, Dutch, Thai, Mandarin Chinese and Cantonese.

(i.e. 2-state and 1-state verbs respectively). In the group of stimuli labelled "activities", two persons are actively involved in some kind of activity (either painting, phoning, drawing or playing with a ball), and these two events are linked temporally in different manners. In the group labelled "achievements", one agent is either sweeping the floor, painting or phoning, and the other depicted event is either the breaking of a vase, the exploding of a balloon or the falling of a bucket with flowers. Again, both events are linked temporally in different manners in different stimuli. The stimulus set is preceded by three training items, in which two lamplights go on and off either simultaneously or sequentially.

All participants are native speakers of Dutch. They are 39 monolingual children, covering four age groups: four-year-olds ($N=10$), five-year-olds ($N=10$), six-year-olds ($N=10$) and seven-year-olds ($N=9$)⁵. All children come from the same primary school⁶ in the Netherlands. The control group consists of 11 adult native speakers of Dutch, all university students in Nijmegen (age group early to mid twenties). The distribution of male and female subjects is counter-balanced.

The task set to all participants was an offline retelling of each stimulus, in answer to the quaestio "*Wat gebeurt er in het filmpje?*" ('What is happening in the clip?'). This particular quaestio proved to work well as a tool to elicit a reference to the core event, rather than a narrative or picture description. The children could see the clips as many times as they wanted. The total time needed for the experimental procedure was about twenty minutes per subject.

The analyses were focused on the performance of the subjects on the task: Did the temporal relation that was depicted by the subject match the one in the stimulus? If so, this resulted in a score of 1. Furthermore, we investigated in what way the relation was expressed: What were the linguistic means that were used by the subject to depict the temporal relation? After having analysed the data produced by the adult group, it turned out that there are four systematic ways in which simultaneity can be established in Dutch. The child data were consequently analysed by examining which of these four strategies were used. It was also investigated whether the children adopted any other linguistic strategies.

5 Results and discussion

5.1 Linguistically expressing simultaneity in Dutch: Adult data

Four different strategies for expressing simultaneity by English and Czech native speakers as well as L2 learners of Czech were described in Schmiedtová (2004). They were taken as a baseline for the analysis of the Dutch adult data in order to examine whether there are commonalities across the languages.

As shown in Table 2, the production data of the Dutch adult control group provide an extensive framework of the way in which simultaneity can be expressed linguistically and it turns out that, indeed, the four strategies are used systematically and frequently

⁵ The last seven-year old turned out to be a bilingual and was, therefore, excluded from the analyses.

⁶ We are grateful to the directors, teachers and parents of the children at the St. Jozefschool in Malden (near Nijmegen, the Netherlands) for the possibility to run the experiments at their school and their hospitality.

across subjects. Importantly, the *aan bet*-construction plays a crucial role in expressions of simultaneity. Table 2 provides an overview of the four linguistic strategies available.

Table 2: Overview of the strategies for expressing simultaneity in Dutch

| Strategy | Description | Examples TOTAL SIM |
|----------------------|--|--|
| Grammatical strategy | Use of the <i>aan bet</i> -construction exclusively or in combination with Aktionsart | De man is <i>aan bet schilderen</i> , de baby is met de bal <i>aan bet spelen</i> . ‘The man is painting, the baby is playing with the ball’. |
| Lexical strategy | Use of temporal adverbials or connectives in combination with Aktionsart | Een meisje belt en <i>terwijl</i> ze belt, speelt de baby met de bal. ‘A girl is on the phone, and while she is on the phone, de baby is playing with the ball’. |
| Combi strategy | Use of grammatical aspect alone or in combination with Aktionsart, plus temporal adverbials (or connectives) | Een man was <i>aan bet verven</i> . <i>Tegelijkertijd</i> was de baby de bal heen en weer <i>aan bet duwen</i> . ‘A man was painting. At the same time, the baby was pushing the ball back and forth’. |
| Aktionsart strategy | Use of contrast or juxtaposition between verb types exclusively | Een man <i>schildert</i> , een aapje <i>tekent</i> . ‘A man paints/is painting, a monkey draws/is drawing’. |

Naturally, neither of the strategies was used in all cases. We are dealing with four perfectly acceptable possibilities, none of which are mutually exclusive. Nevertheless, it can be observed that the combi strategy was adopted in a large number of cases (in 47% of all expressions of simultaneity). The Aktionsart strategy, on the other hand, was used the least by the adult native speakers of Dutch (only in 4% of all expressions of simultaneity). Obviously, the use of the combi strategy leads to the most *explicit* expression of a simultaneity of events, whereas the use of the Aktionsart strategy results in a very *implicit* reference to simultaneous events (see examples Table 2), and is interpreted as a total lack of using either explicit grammatical or explicit lexical means. Adults thus prefer to be explicit in this task. Regarding temporal adverbials and connectives, it can be noted that a wide range of simultaneity-specific adverbials was used.

5.2 Expressing simultaneity in Dutch: Children's data

Children of all age groups employed the four strategies above, though in different distributions (see Figure 1)⁷.

⁷ Total number of (interpretable) utterances: four-year-olds: N=49, five-year-olds: N=60, six-year-olds: N=80, seven-year-olds: N=71).

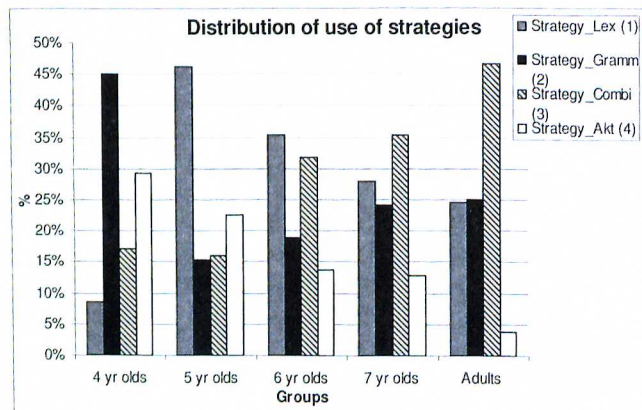


Figure 1: Distribution of use of strategies for expressing simultaneity in Dutch

The four-year-olds prefer to use the grammatical strategy and the Aktionsart strategy is employed quite frequently as well (Figure 1). This in itself is an interesting finding: Section 3 has shown that grammatical means for the expression of simultaneity was not the main focus of most studies, including the Dutch ones. This clearly shows that the youngest children already use the *aan het*-construction when referring to two events that are happening at the same time. Moreover, this age group also shows a relatively high frequency of use of the Aktionsart strategy. In fact, the children seemed to have individual preferences for using grammatical aspect or not (using the Aktionsart strategy instead) in most of their retellings. This shows that they seem to differentiate between these two categories in Dutch. It is plausible to assume that these two categories are in fact different in Dutch and belong to two different linguistic domains: The grammar (aspect) and the lexicon (Aktionsart).

Turning to the five-year-olds, their preferred strategy is the lexical strategy. This finding goes hand in hand with the fact that also the range of temporal adverbials and connectives they use has expanded when compared to the four-year-olds. Also, most of their retellings appear to be structured through the phrase in (2).

- (2) *eerst* ... (reference to event 1), *en toen/dan*... (reference to event 2)
 'first...and then...'

The use of this narrative structuring device results in many PNO-centred depictions of temporal relations: The children seem to follow a chronological order when employing this device. This (usually) does not apply to a simultaneity of events, because it is the prototypical frame for retelling sequential situations. Nevertheless, it is present in the children's retellings of clips showing simultaneities of the types overlap and inclusion, which always results in a mismatch between the temporal relation depicted in the stimulus and the retelling (score=0). Interestingly, this finding seems to coincide with the fact that the five-year-olds' show a better performance on clips depicting a sequence of events when compared to the four-year-olds.

The six-year-olds do not have a clear preference for one of the four strategies. What can be observed is a sudden increase in the use of the combi strategy in comparison

with the two younger age groups. Furthermore, a wider range of simultaneity-specific temporal adverbials and conjunctions (e.g. *op dat moment* 'at that moment') is used and the six-year-olds tend to use them either in combination with Aktionsart or grammatical aspect. The seven-year-olds' use of strategies resembles the pattern in the adult data: They too prefer to use the combi strategy, whereas the Aktionsart strategy is neglected.

All in all, a development can be observed from being rather implicit on this task by using Aktionsart alone or in combination with grammatical aspect to being very explicit by combining grammatical aspect and lexical items.

5.3 Establishing temporal relations: An overview of the children's abilities

5.3.1 Four-year-olds

Overall, the performance of the four-year-olds on this task was rather good. Particularly interesting is that there is a trend in the data for better performance at the stimuli depicting a *total simultaneity*. Looking at the illustration of all types in Table 1, this makes sense (see section 2).

There were, however, some interesting constraints on their performance. One of them is a *Focus on Change of State* (COS). Many of the four-year-olds directed all of their attention to the change of state taking place in the clip (if any). The change of state was usually represented by the leaving or entering of one of the protagonists or, for the clips depicting achievements, the falling of a bucket with flowers or the breaking of a vase. Regardless of the temporal relation being depicted in the stimulus, the children mentioned the change of state either firstly or even exclusively. One can imagine that this, in most cases, does not result in the establishment of chronological order. An example is depicted in (3), which is the child's retelling of an inclusion stimulus.

(3) *Inclusion* → score=0 (COS mentioned first)

| | | | |
|--------|----------------------|--------|------------------------|
| INV: | wat gebeurt er? | INV: | 'what is happening?' |
| CH001: | dat die glas valt | CH001: | 'that the glass falls' |
| INV: | en wat nog meer? | INV: | 'and what else' |
| CH001: | dat die jongen veegt | CH001: | 'that the boy sweeps' |

This shows that the two events are processed in a non-adult-like manner: Since the onset of the *falling*-event actually comes second in the stimulus, this retelling does not follow the PNO. What this means is that children at this stage do not pay attention to the temporal frame of the depicted situation, but rather focus on changes. These changes are the most salient parts of the event, because they signal a discontinuation of the depicted process, i.e. of a particular activity that the protagonist is involved in. In other words, the child's attention is directed to changes, which disrupt the flow of the events.

This phenomenon happens very frequently throughout the data and leads to a wrong (or unclear) depiction of the temporal relation because the child disregards the parts of the situation that are not part of the change taking place. In all cases, it is not due to a memory or processing problem since children show this difficulty with nearly all types of simultaneity, ignoring the inherent complexity of the different types. In this context, it is interesting to note that changes in general represent the most prominent

points of attention in children's perceptions of the world, particularly for infants (e.g. Wood & Spelke, 2005).

Another phenomenon that was present in the four-year-olds' data is a so-called *Here-and-Now-Bias*. Many of the children link the entire event to the time of utterance, to their deictic here-and-now (example in (4)).

(4) *Sequentiality* → score=1

CH004: is de aap weer aan het [/] aan CH004: 'is the monkey again drawing
het tekenen

CH004: en de papa was *net* aan het CH004: and the daddy was just (a
schilderen minute ago) painting

CH004: en de papa is *nu* weggelopen CH004: and the daddy has now
walked away'

We see that both subevents are related to the *now* of the speaker, and not linked temporally to one another. Nevertheless, this retelling is interpreted as a sequence of events, so the score is 1. You can imagine that this is not always the case.

It is striking here that the child again does not follow the PNO, even though for adults this might be the easiest way of referring to a sequence of events. Apparently, for these children the easiest scope of temporal reference is deictic perception-based reference. Previous studies have similarly observed that children start out with a default here-and-now interpretation of temporal events (e.g. Gretsch, 2004; Bittner, 2003).

5.3.2 Five-year-olds

The five-year-olds demonstrate another remarkable phenomenon: The *Defocusing of the Final Boundary* (DFB). Children showed a tendency to ignore the final boundary of the first event mentioned (example in (5)).

(5) *Sequentiality* → score=0 (DFB)

CH013: eerst ging het jongetje poetsen CH013: 'at first the boy went-
cleaning

CH013: en toen kwam het aapje CH013: and then the monkey came
aanlopen walking in

CH013: en die ging kleuren CH013: and he went-colouring'

The leaving of the first protagonist (the *jongetje*) is not mentioned. This means that a sequence of events is not established. This constraint occurred mainly with stimuli depicting a sequence or an overlap of events. Turning back to the illustrations in Table 1, this might be due to the relatively high number of changes of state taking place. We take this to mean that at this stage of development the tracking of the number of changes of state is a tricky issue for the children and it is plausible to assume that a high number of changes of state simply represents a too large cognitive load. To support this claim, one would need to investigate children's performance on a task involving their comprehension of all simultaneity types. A similar difficulty in handling sequential and overlapping events was observed for German in Schmiedtová & Gretsch (2002). Again, it is crucial to stress that these children do not adhere to the PNO in their expressions of simultaneity (as in type overlap) and sequence.

5.3.3 Six- and seven-year-olds

The six- and the seven-year-olds' skills for temporal linking are already quite adult-like. The main difference between the two groups is that the seven-year-olds are more explicit in their expressions of simultaneity. Both groups show a decrease in the phenomena described above, although they are still present in some children's retellings. In general, they have become more successful in globally linking events, rather than linking them to TU. Also, most children seem to follow the PNO in their establishment of temporal relations.

6 Conclusions

This study has provided additional evidence that grammatical aspect plays an important role in expressions of simultaneity since it is used by all native speakers. This confirms our initial hypothesis about the relevance of grammatical aspect for the expression of simultaneity. In Dutch, the *aan bet*-construction has the grammatical function of conveying progressivity and children use this construction in expressions of simultaneity from an early age onwards. Dutch children as well as adults also differentiate between the two linguistic domains of grammatical aspect and Aktionsart, which we take as evidence that this distinction exists in the Dutch language. Moreover, this study has shown that there is a development regarding the use of grammatical aspect in expressions of simultaneity: Children start out by using this exclusively and gradually start combining the *aan bet*-construction with lexical items, thus rendering a rather explicit description of simultaneous events.

The present paper also presented a developmental framework of children's abilities to link events temporally. The first phase in the development is a phase in which internal temporal linking is not the default. Children are sensitive to changes of state and these appear to be the most salient pieces of information for verbalization. If there is linkage, the event is linked to the time of utterance. In the second stage, children are still predominantly interested in changes of state, but now it seems to be difficult to keep track of them. In the third stage, temporal linking is already quite successful and only at this point there is a dominant adherence to the Principle of Natural Order. The lack of narrations centred around the PNO at the earlier stages seems to coincide with the finding that there is no better performance on sequentiality. Sequential order does not dominate young children's organization of temporal information. The present study provides evidence that simultaneous order is also present in young children's conceptions of time.

Future research on simultaneity might also benefit from including grammatical means, a distinction between simultaneity types (and thus distinguishing between difficulty levels), and an experimental task, which is (presumably) void of complicated discourse-related principles.

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The attitudes of the British towards Dutch speakers of English

Warda Nejari, Marinel Gerritsen, Monique van der Haagen, & Hubert Korzilius

This paper reports on a between subject experiment in which the attitudes of 144 highly educated British professionals towards Dutch-accented English and RP were measured. Half of the respondents were familiar with Dutch English, and half unfamiliar. The test items consisted of samples of RP, moderately Dutch-English and lightly Dutch-English accents. Respondents were asked to rate one of the samples on a number of personality traits. An analysis of these traits rates showed a resolution into two factors: STATUS and AFFECT. RP speakers were assigned more Status than both Dutch accents. RP speakers and slightly accented Dutch-English speakers commanded more Affect than moderately accented Dutch English speakers. In addition, respondents unfamiliar with Dutch English had a more positive attitude towards speakers with a moderate Dutch English accent than respondents familiar with Dutch English and the latter assigned a lower affect to RP speakers than the former.

The expression of simultaneity in L1 Dutch

Monique Flecken & Barbara Schmiedtová

The focus of the current study is on the temporal relation of simultaneity between events. Investigating the expression of simultaneity, and the development thereof, reveals interesting insights concerning the use of a particular grammatical aspectual marker in Dutch. Adult native speakers of Dutch and 4-7-year-old children acquiring Dutch as their only L1 were set to the task of retelling simple animated clips depicting either simultaneous or sequential events. The data provide an overview of linguistic means available in Dutch for expressing various types of simultaneity. A main finding is that the Dutch progressive construction - aan het + V-inf zijn - is widely used when expressing simultaneous events, already from an early age onwards. Furthermore, when examining children's production data, several age-specific temporal linking strategies can be described. For example, children do not always adhere to the Principle of Natural Order in their narrations. Instead, children, especially at the early developmental stages, are mainly concerned with changes of state in the depicted event. That means, changes of state have a direct impact on children's cognitive development of temporality. We speculate that the concept of simultaneity is therefore easier to acquire than that of sequentiality.

Acquisition order of Dutch as a second language Exploring the validity of Pienemann's Processability Theory

Myra Arends

The assumption that L2 acquisition is constrained by processing is the basis for several approaches to SLA. Pienemann's Processability Theory (PT) is one of them