Description: This course focuses on well-known problems that second language learners experience with inflectional morphology (such as tense, agreement, number) and function words (such as articles and object clitics). We will examine a number of different approaches which aim to explain these problems in terms of L1 transfer and/or grammatical deficits. There will be a particular focus the extent to which the Prosodic Transfer Hypothesis of Goad & White can explain the difficulties that L2 learners have.

Requirements: Attendance and active participation in the seminar; one class presentation (see guidelines for class presentations). Submission of brief comments on readings in advance of each class. This course will be graded on a Pass/Fail basis.

Course Outline:

Jan 12th: Overview: morphological variability in L2 acquisition; prosodification of functional material
   • White 2008
   • Selkirk 1996

Jan 19th: Some accounts of problems with inflectional morphology in SLA
   • Lardiere 2007, Ch 4 (mapping problems; syllabification problems)
   • Hawkins & Liszka 2003 (syntactic deficit: Representational Deficit Hypothesis)

Jan 26th: Variable production of inflectional morphology: a role for phonology
   • Bayley 1996 (variationist approach to past tense deletion in Mandarin-English)
   • Goad, White & Steele 2003 (introduction to Prosodic Transfer Hypothesis: agreement in Mandarin-English)

Feb 2nd: Prosodic transfer in the comprehension and production of inflectional morphology
   • Lieberman 2013 (PTH in comprehension: plural and agreement in Spanish/French-English)
   • Cabrelli Amaro, Campos Dintrans & Rothman (2016) (syntactic deficit vs. prosodic deficit: tense in Spanish/Mandarin/Japanese-English)

Feb 9th: Minimal adaptation of L1 prosodic representations
   • Goad & White 2006 (tense and participial morphology in Mandarin-English)
   • Austin 2014, Ch 3 (tense, agreement and plural in Korean-English)
Feb 16th: Phonological transfer at what level of representation?
- Bruhn de Garavito 2008 (syllabification problems in French-Spanish plurals)
- Goad, White & Bruhn de Garavito (problems with the prosodic organization of plural)

Feb 23rd & Mar 9th: Articles in production and comprehension
- White 2003 (background on article omission; articles vs. TAP in Turkish-English)
- Goad & White 2004 (prosodic account of deletion of articles vs. TAP; minimal adaptation of L1 representations)
- Goad & White 2008 (article production in Mandarin-English)
- Prévost, Goad & Steinhauer 2011 (article comprehension in Turkish-English)

Mar 16th: Counter arguments
- Trenkic 2007 (syntactic misanalysis; processing considerations)
- Goad & White 2009a (against Trenkic; full access in the prosodic domain)

Mar 23rd: Definite/indefinite asymmetries: phonological considerations
- Goad & White 2009b (vowel harmony targeting articles)
- Another reading to be added

Mar 30th: Object clitics; other areas where prosody impacts development
- Buckley 2004 (syntax and phonology of object clitics in English-French)
- Another reading to be added

Readings:


Lieberman, M. 2013. The importance of comprehension to a rounded view of second language acquisition, 2nd half. Talk presented at University of Utah.


