

Acquisition of English Negation by Norwegian Children

Ravem, R. (1968). Language acquisition in a second language environment.
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Negation in Norwegian

Hun er ikke hjemme

She is not at home

Hun har ikke gjort det.

She has not done it.

Hun kunne ikke gjøre det.

She could not do it.

Hun likte ikke bilen.

She did not like the car.

Hun likte den ikke.

She did not like it.

Hun satt i en bil [som hun ikke likte].

She sat in a car [that she did not like].

Notice that in English the negator is placed before the lexical verb but after the auxiliary. What prediction would contrastive analysis make about the placement of the negator in the English interlanguage of Norwegians?

Acquisition of English by two Norwegian children, Reidun (3:9 – 4:7, female) and Rune (6:6 – 6:11, male)

1. After 4 months of exposure to English L2

Not like it.

No, not mummy said that.

No, ikke mummy skal til London

Not mummy skal til London

Not I have a butterfly.

2. After 5 months of exposure, Reidun uses intonation (a high-falling nuclear tone) to signal negation

Hun ↓have. Hun ↓have. (= she hasn't)

↓Likes her bed. (= she doesn't like her bed)

↓Like it. (= I don't like it)

3. Negation with main verbs

I not like it.

I not know.

You not get off the car.

You not do it.

4. After 7 months of exposure

I don't think so.

I don't want to ...

Jig don't need all ...

That don't go.

That don't fall down.

Is the prediction of contrastive analysis confirmed? Why or why not?