

the other hand, suppletive stems are derived in the vocabulary via readjustment rules and then enter the enumeration.

Finally, it is proposed that allomorphic cases, which are not phonologically conditioned, are accounted for in terms of the vocabulary's organisation. There is no need to assume that they are the product of phonological, syntactic or morpholexical rules. A consequence is that allomorphy is no longer considered to be a non-productive process.

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Maria Mastropavlou. *The Role of Phonological Salience and Feature Interpretability in the Grammar of Typically Developing and Language Impaired Children*. Aristotle University of Thessaloniki, 2006.

The aim of this thesis is to address two fundamental questions related to the nature of specific language impairment: first, is the locus of the problem in the representation of formal features and what is it that renders them inaccessible to SLI children? And second, does language development in SLI deviate from typical language acquisition in such a way that we can talk about language impairment rather than language delay?

Three groups of children were recruited: an experimental group of ten children with specific language impairment, aged between 4.2 and 5.9, and two control groups selected based on chronological age (age-matched) and language development (language-matched). The three groups were administered a number of speech elicitation tests, which aimed at an investigation of the formal features of tense in the verbal domain, as well as gender, case and number in the nominal domain. Specifically, the effect of feature interpretability — both LF and PF — on the children's performance was explored, while performance differences between the

SLI and the two control groups were analysed with respect to the delay/deviance question. The results indicated that LF uninterpretable features like tense and case cause greater difficulties to SLI children than number, an LF interpretable feature. Gender, a lexical/intrinsic feature, seems to be highly accessible to these children, who did not exhibit any notable difficulties. Furthermore, PF interpretability presented strong effects in the SLI children's performance in tense marking, a pattern that was not observed in either of the two control groups' results.

These results suggest that LF interpretability determines the extent to which formal features are accessible to SLI grammars, while PF interpretability constitutes a means of compensation for an underlying morphological deficit. Detailed analyses of the children's error patterns indicated that SLI children have reduced skills of acquiring morphological features and depend on information available on a semantic, lexical or phonological level to a greater extent than unaffected children do. Finally, it is claimed that specific language impairment impedes the acquisition of the morphological expression of formal features rather than their abstract representation, while the different error patterns exhibited by the language-impaired group compared to the two control groups indicate deviant rather than delayed development.



Christopher Anton Rytting. *Preserving Subsegmental Variation in Modeling Word Segmentation (or, the Raising of Baby Mondegreen).* The Ohio State University, 2007.

Many computational models (e.g. Christiansen et al. 1998, Brent 1999, Batchelder 2002) have been developed to show how infants break apart utterances into words prior to building a vocabulary — the word segmentation task. However, these models have been tested in relatively few languages, with little attention paid to how the phonological properties of different languages may affect the relative effectiveness of particular statistical heuristics. Moreover, even for English, since these models generally rely on transcriptions rather than on speech for input, they have shown little regard for the *subsegmental* variation naturally found in the speech signal. A model using transcriptional input makes unrealistic assumptions that may overestimate the model's effectiveness, relative to how it would perform on more variable input such as that found in speech. This dissertation addresses these two limitations of previous models with a series of simulations using corpora from Modern Greek and English.