

Preface

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The Acquisition of the DP in Modern Greek

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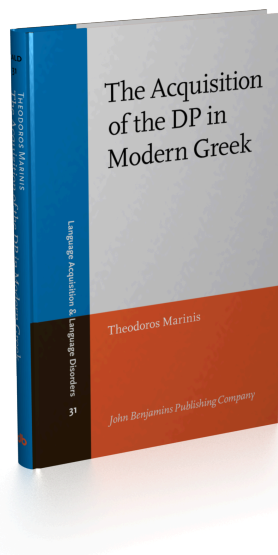
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Preface

The acquisition of the Determiner Phrase (DP) has been one of the central topics of interest in recent years. Research in this area has brought insight into the development of the DP cross-linguistically and has provided empirical evidence for the interaction of the acquisition of syntax and morphology. Moreover, development in linguistic theory has opened new dimensions and has brought new tools for the description and understanding of the development of child speech.

This book explores the acquisition of the DP in Modern Greek (MG) in the domains of syntax, semantics and morphology. The goal of this book is threefold: (a) to describe the development of the acquisition of the DP in MG, (b) to discuss and evaluate predictions deriving from current theoretical analyses of the DP, and (c) to provide insight into general aspects of the language acquisition process and implications for linguistic theory.

The main questions that will be discussed in this book are:

- When do we have evidence for the acquisition of the functional layers of the nominal domain in MG?
- Are the properties attributed to the DP acquired simultaneously or incrementally?
- What is the relationship between the acquisition of syntax and morphology of the DP?
- When are language specific properties of the Greek DP such as the use of multiple definite articles acquired?
- When do complex DPs involving the possessive construction, Determiner Spreading and appositive constructions emerge in child Greek?
- Is the core system of the nominal domain acquired simultaneously with the Left Periphery of the DP?

In order to answer these questions, I will investigate the acquisition of simple DPs consisting of articles and nouns as well as the acquisition of complex DPs.

As far as simple DPs are concerned, I will investigate the acquisition of definite and indefinite articles. The emergence of definite and indefinite articles

and their productive use can provide evidence for the presence of the functional layers DP and FP of the nominal domain. Further, I will investigate the syntax-semantics interface within Chierchia's Nominal Mapping Parameter. Finally, I will analyse the emergence and consistent marking of number and case marking in nouns and definite articles. This can provide evidence for the functional layers NumP and FP and for the relationship between the acquisition of syntax and morphology.

With respect to the acquisition of complex DPs, I will investigate the acquisition of the possessive construction, Determiner Spreading, and appositive constructions involving kinship terms and proper names. The study of the acquisition of these constructions can shed light into the acquisition of language specific properties of the DP, such as the acquisition of multiple definite articles and the acquisition of word-order within the DP. Finally, the acquisition of these constructions can show whether structures involving the Left Periphery of the DP are acquired simultaneously or later than phenomena associated with the core domain of the DP.

This book is organised as follows: Chapter 1 is concerned with central notions of language acquisition within the Generative Grammar, i.e. with the notion of Universal Grammar within the Principles and Parameters Theory and the Minimalist Program and the main hypotheses that have been articulated for the acquisition process within these models. Chapter 2 is the methodology chapter, in which I present the sources of data that have been used in this book and I will discuss methodological issues, such as the use of imitations, repetitions, the use of formulae and the calculation of MLU. Chapter 3 describes the syntax, syntax-semantics interface and morphology of the Greek DP. Chapter 4 deals with the acquisition of simple DPs, consisting of article and noun sequences. Based on data from the syntax, syntax-semantics interface and morphology, it focuses on the acquisition of the functional layers of the Greek DP. Chapters 5 to 7 investigate the acquisition of complex DPs. Chapter 5 presents data on the acquisition of the possessive construction, Chapter 6 presents the acquisition of Determiner Spreading, and Chapter 7 the acquisition of appositive constructions. The results of this book are summarised and further discussed in Chapter 8.