Thinking about the actuation problem for syntactic change:

- (limits to) language contact as a source of language change
- (limits to) adult innovation as a source of syntactic change
- (limits to) inertia
- any role for first language acquisition?

1. Variation in quantifier scope in adult and child Korean (Han, Lidz and Musolino 2007)

   (1) a. John-nom apple-acc two piece NEG eat-PST-DECL
      “John didn’t eat two apples.” (short negation)
   b. John-nom apple-acc two piece eat-CINEG do-PST-DECL
      “John didn’t eat two apples.” (long negation)

   Interpretations:

   (2) a. +/+ It’s not the case that John ate two apples.
   b. +/* There were two apples that John didn’t eat.

2. Variation in possessives in child Dutch (Kampen and Corver 2004)

   (3) a. Stijn-tje-se moeder kwam ons halen (Dutch child language: 6;7.14)
       Stijntje’s mother came us get (Stijntje is a girl’s name)
       Standard adult: Stijntjes moeder kwam ons halen
   b. Dit is wie-se? (Dutch child language: 6;3)
       This is whose?
       Standard adult: Van wie is dit?

   (4) a. vader-sen hond (dialect of Helmond)
       father-sen dog
   b. wie-se stoel (dialect of Helmond)
       who-se chair
(5) Standard Dutch doubling construction (limited to animate possessors):
   a. Jan z’n broer
      Jan his brother
   b. Els d’r broer
      Els her brother
   c. de man z’n broer
      The man his brother
   d. het meisje d’r broer
      The girl her brother
   e. *? de boot z’n romp
      the boat his/its hull

(6) Standard Dutch possessor -s construction (limited to proper names)
   a. Jans broer
      Jan’s brother
   b. * hems broer
      him’s brother
   c. * de mans broer
      the man’s brother
   d. * de boots romp
      the boat’s hull

(7)

(8)

(9) a. Child 1: D = -n Sannen (= Sannes/that of Sanne); Saskian (= Saskias);
    Tinken (= Tinkes)
   b. Child 2: D= -se jullie-se poppen / mekaar-se spullen / dit is wie-se? / het
    is Agnes-se / dat is Joep-se youpl-se dolls / each other-se things / this is
    who-se? / it is Agnes-se/ that is Joep-se

Note: The Dutch children fail to recognize that z’n is the reduced/clitic form of
the pronoun zijn and overgeneralize it as a possessive affix. Both the scope of the
overgeneralization and the phonetic forms of the affix are paralleled in regional Dutch
dialects.

(10) a. Where this comes from?
    b. What not starts with?
    c. How them buy their tents?
    d. Why we can’t wear sneakers?

(11) a. Where’s Philadelphia?
    b. What does the sun do to snow?
    c. How do babies get inside the mommies?
    d. Why are we going down?

(12) a. Why that boy is looking at us?
b. Why you gotta went to a conference?
c. Why we can’t go in the upstairs bed?
d. Why anyone’s not sitting in that seat?

(13) a. Why you didn’t bring me to Margie’s house?
b. Why she doesn’t like bananas?
c. Why Daddy’s never coming to watch?

(14) a. Che cosa ha fatto Gianni?
    what thing has done Gianni
b. * Che cosa Gianni ha fatto

(15) a. Perché Gianni è venuto?
    why Gianni is come
b. Perché è venuto Gianni?

4. English tough-movement (Anderson 2005)

(16) The king was hard to draw.

(17) a. The king was hard [____ to draw]
     “It was hard for the king to draw (something).”
b. The king was hard [to draw____]
     “It was hard (for someone) to draw the king.”

(18) He found the natives very hard to believe that the fact was possible.
    (1726-7 Swift Gulliver’s Travels, book III.x)

(19) The black of the eye is hardest to be healed
     “The pupil of the eye is hardest to heal.”

(20) O João é sempre difícil de pagar.
    the John is always difficult to pay
(21) From a maneuverability perspective, the airplane is very easy to go to regimes that other aircraft can’t go. Lt. Col. Jeffrey Harrigian, USAF, 43rd Fighter Squadron commander quoted in the AETCNS web newsletter #081803266, Aug. 18, 2003.