Nothing in linguistics makes sense except in the light of change

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Nothing in biology makes sense except in the light of evolution (Theodosius Dobzhansky 1973)

1. Primary Linguistic Data (Universal Grammar → Grammar)

Binding theory and learning

2.  a. They$_i$ washed themselves$_i$.
   
   b. Kim$_i$’s father loves her$_i$.
   
   c. Kim$_i$ heard $\text{DP}[\text{Bill’s speeches about her$_i$}]$.
   
   d. Kim left.
   
   e. *Kim$_i$ said that Kim$_i$ left

Punctuated Equilibrium in study of diachronic syntax

Development of formal approaches to syntax


Cue-based discovery model of acquisition (Dresher 1999, Fodor 1998, Lightfoot 1999)

First Novelty: New Inflectional items

3.  a. He has understood chapter 4
   
   b. *He has could understand chapter 4

4.  a. Understanding chapter 4, ...
   
   b. *Canning understand chapter 4, ...

5.  a. He wanted to understand
   
   b. *He wanted to can understand

6.  a. He will try to understand
b. *He will can understand

7. a. He understands music
b. *He can music

8. I fear that the emperor will depart thence, before my letters shall may come unto your grace’s hands (1532, Cranmer, Letters)

9. That appered at the fyrste to mow stande the realm in grete stede (1533, More, Works 885 C1), ‘appeared at first to be able to stand the realm in good stead.’

10. If wee had mought convenient come togyther, ye woulde rather haue chosin to haue harde my minde of mine owne mouthe (1528, More, Works 107 H6), ‘if we had been able to come together conveniently, …’

11. IP
   Spec  IP
         
         I  VP
           
           V  VP
             can  see stars

12. IP
   Spec  IP
         
         I  VP
           
           can
             V  VP
               see  stars

13. present tense: fremme, fremst, fremþ, fremmaþ. sēo, siehst, siehþ, sēop. rīde, rītst, rītt, rīdaþ
    past tense: fremed, fremedest, fremede, fremedon. rād, ride, rād and ridon
14. They might/must/could/should/would leave tomorrow.

Former preterite-present verbs became non-verb-like (no 3rd sg –s ending, -d forms with non-past, “subjunctive” meanings

**Second Novelty: Loss of IV**

15. a. *Understands Kim chapter 4?
   
b. Does Kim understand chapter 4?

16. a. *Kim understands not chapter 4
   
b. Kim does not understand chapter 4

17. a. *Kim reads always the newspapers
   
b. Kim always reads newspapers

18. IP
   
   Spec IP
   
   I VP
   
   V N
   
   see stars

19 a. Where **didst thou** see her? - O unhappy girl! - With the Moor, **say'st thou**?
   
b. I **like not** that. // What **dost thou** say?
   
c. Alas, what **does this gentleman** conceive? - How **do you**, madam?

**Third Novelty: Atomic forms of be**

20. a. Kim slept well, and Jim will [sc. sleep well] too.
   
b. Kim seems well behaved today, and she often has [sc. seemed well behaved] in the past, too.
   
c. Although Kim went to the store, Jim didn’t [sc. go to the store].
   
d. slept: [past+v-sleep]

21. a. Kim will be here, and Jim will [sc be here] too.
b. Kim has been here, and Jim has [sc. been here] too.
c. *Kim was here and Jim will [sc. be here] too.
d. *If Kim is well behaved today, then Jim probably will [sc. be well behaved] too.
e. *Kim was here yesterday and Jim has [sc. been here] today.

22. a. I wish our opinions were the same. But in time they will [sc. be the same]. 1816, Jane Austen, *Emma*, ed. R. W. Chapman (London: Oxford University Press, 1933), 471.
c. I think, added he, all the Charges attending it, and the Trouble you had, were defray’d by my Attorney: I ordered that they should [sc. be defrayed]. 1741, Samuel Richardson, *Pamela* (London, 3rd edn.), vol.2, 129.
d. That bettre loved is noon, ne never schal. C1370, Chaucer, *A complaint to his lady*, 80, ‘So that no one is better loved, or ever shall [sc. be loved].’
e. *were: [subjunctive+V be]

23. a. Kim was to go to Paris.
b. *Kim will be to go to Paris.

24. a. Kim has been to Paris.
b. *Kim was to Paris.

25. a. I regretted Kim reading that chapter.
b. I regretted that Kim was reading that chapter.
c. *I regretted Kim being reading that chapter.

b. I was this morning to buy silk. 1762, Oliver Goldsmith, *Cit W*: 158 (meaning ‘I went to ...’ not ‘I had to ...’).
c. One day being discoursing with her upon the extremities they suffered ... 1791, Daniel Defoe, *Robinson Crusoe*, vol. 2, 218.

27. a. You are being naughty. You are being a bore
b. Everything is being done. Susan is being arrested.

**Primary Linguistic Data**

Primary Linguistic Data, (Universal Grammar → I-language)
References


