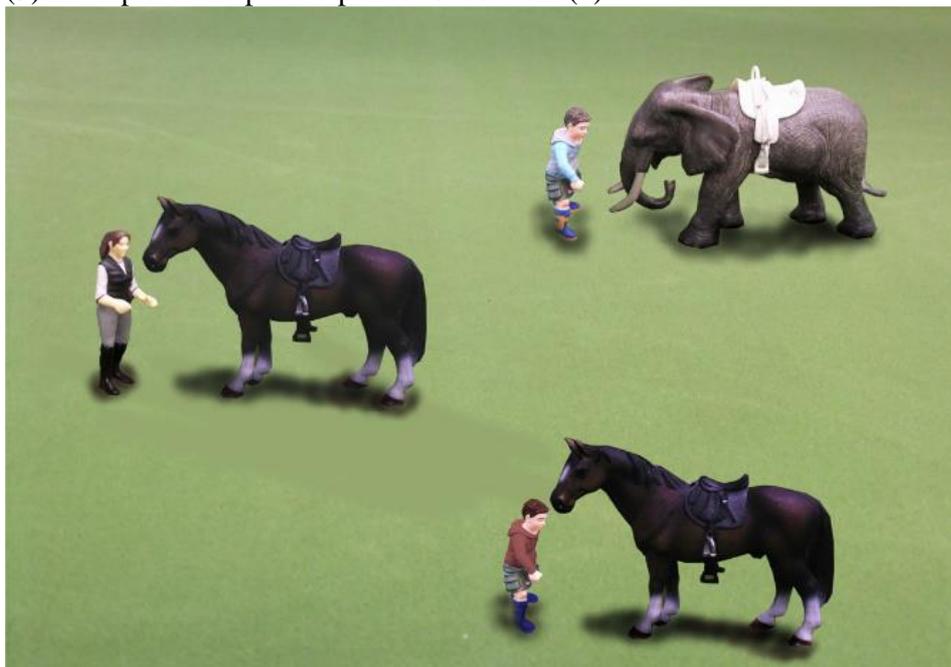




ensure that the child correctly understood the meaning of the test sentence; c) a repetition task, in which the child had to repeat the test sentence.

(5) Example of the picture paired to test item (1)



The experiment comprised 24 items, which only differed regarding verb placement: 12 verb final items (1a) and 12 V2 items (1b). All stimuli met the conditions for licensing iV2, as listed above (a-e). Children's attempted repetitions were analyzed according to how often verb placement of the test item was altered. The data, so far for 20 out of 90 typically developing monolingual German-speaking children (age range 3;2-5;9) and for 21 adults, reveal clear response patterns. Children repeated verb final RCs significantly more often correctly (62%) than iV2 structures (48%) (Wilcoxon:  $Z=1.998$ ,  $p=.046$ ), whereas adults performed at ceiling in both conditions. Moreover, children changed iV2 structures to verb final RCs (21%) more often than verb final RCs into iV2 (10%); this difference was not yet significant.

According to our preliminary experimental results, preschool children show a tendency to prefer verb final RCs over iV2 structures, which may indicate that children first acquire verb final RCs. Further analyses of the full data set will shed light on the developmental path of iV2 structures in German. Our preliminary results are not compatible with the acquisition pattern proposed in Tomasello (2003). Moreover, the results challenge the syntactic coordination analysis given in (2). Instead, the data suggest that iV2 structures contain a more complex structure. Elaborating on den Dikken's (2005) hypothesis, we will argue that our results – if they remain robust – support the hypothesis of a null Topic0 mediating between the two clauses, i.e. specifying the second clause as a comment on the first clause.

#### **Selected references**

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