

On the acquisition of passives

This paper enters a very lively debate on the acquisition of passives, which has been the focus of much research on language acquisition in different languages. The paper contributes to the debate by investigating both the comprehension and the production of passive sentences in Italian-speaking children, in both their pre-school and school age. Italian children's knowledge of passives built with auxiliary *venire*, which is only compatible with the eventive reading of passives, excludes the possibility of analysing children's passives as different structures. The paper also discusses the role of input in language acquisition and shows how a massive input of passive sentences via reading aloud of texts containing this structure influences both comprehension and production. Finally, it discusses the production of passives and competing structures in the elicited production of different types of sentences.