**Damaris Bartz & Dagmar Bittner (ZAS, Berlin):**
***"Expressing adversativity: morpho-syntactic properties of early "aber"-sentences in German L1-acquisition."***

To our knowledge, the existing studies on the acquisition of the adversative connector *but* (Germ. aber) are focused nearly exclusively on the emergence of the semantic properties or use types of the connector (e.g. Kyratzis & Ervin-Tripp 1999, Gülzow et al. in press). All studies found a stepwise emergence of the different use types (i.e. semantic opposition, denial of expectation, illocution etc.). The question which is not answered yet is what determines the observed order of acquisition. On the one hand, there clearly is an increase in semantic complexity between some use types, e.g. between semantic opposition (*Max is a musician, but not a painter*) and denial of expectation (*Max is a musician but he likes soccer*). On the other hand, well-formed but-utterances exhibit certain syntactic conditions concerning verb position, negation or even elliptic structure. Furthermore some use types are bound to specific syntactic structures. Semantic opposition, for instance, often requires syntactic parallelism of the related connects; other use types require a certain type and position of negation etc. Figuring out how semantic and syntactic factors interact in the acquisition of the use types of the connector *but*, is the long term goal of the cross-linguistic project on the acquisition of *but*.

One step towards this goal is a detailed analysis of the syntactic development of *but*-clauses. In our talk we will present analyses of the syntactic structure of the early aber-connects documented in the longitudinal data of one L1-German child. The question we address is whether the syntactic development of *aber*-connects in the first year of *aber*-production is embedded in the overall syntactic development of main-clause structure or whether there is a specific path of development raised by the adversative meaning of the connector.

In German, the connector *aber* -like the connector *und*- coordinates two main clauses, i.e. clauses having the finite verb in V2-position and allowing non-subject phrases in the pre-verbal position (Vorfeld).

(1) Die Sonne scheint am Tag ABER IN DER NACHT SCHEINT DER MOND.
    The sun shines at day but the moon shines at night

Given this one could expect that the syntactic structure of the *aber*-connects a child produces is not different from the syntactic structure of the other types of main clauses in the child's language production. The respective hypothesis is: The syntactic development of *aber*-connects should be embedded in the overall syntactic development. However, the adversative connector *aber* emerges about two-to-three months later in the children's language production than the additive connector *und* 'and'. The cross-linguistically later acquisition of the adversative connector is explained by an increase in the semantic complexity of the coherence relation assigned by the connector. While the additive connector *and* only assigns the feature [+additive] the adversative connector *but* additionally assigns the feature [+ polarity], that is it means [+additive; +polar] (Evers-Vermeul & Sanders 2009). The higher semantic complexity of the adversative connector might have costs which affect the syntactic development of *but/ (aber)*-connects. So it could even be that the syntactic development of *but/ (aber)*-connects is not embedded in the overall syntactic development of main clauses. At least three scenarios are possible in this case:

a) The syntactic development of *but/ (aber)*-connects proceeds slower but shows the same developmental path than that of main clauses in general;

b) The syntactic development of *but/ (aber)*-connects proceeds not slower but on a deviant developmental path than that of main clauses in general;

c) The syntactic development of *but/ (aber)*-connects proceeds slower and on a deviant developmental path than that of main clauses in general.

The scenario under b) is ruled out by the finding that the V2-position realizing the category of finiteness (Jordens 2012) and emerging in *aber*-connects 5-6 months after the first productions of *aber* is acquired 2-3 months later than in main clauses in general. Taking into account further criteria we will discuss whether scenario a) or c) is at place and in what sense the syntactic development constraints the emergence of semantic use types of *aber*-connects.