

(Vorläufig?) beschränkte Kompetenz: L2 acquisition of *Be-*

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Abstract

This experiment examines the adult L2 acquisition of the *be-* prefix. In German, *be-* requires not only (i) that objects appear (transitivity), but also (ii) that the subject is an Agent and (iii) that objects are “totally affected.”. For two levels of English-speaking learners and for native speakers, we employed a judgment task to examine these requirements by manipulating the arguments appearing with particular verbs. Results from the natives are fully consistent with expectations. Of interest among the L2 findings is that the low-level learners have distinct preferences for particular configurations of arguments while the intermediates appear to have few preferences at all. For the low-level learners, findings may indicate only that the task was too difficult. For the intermediates, however, we suggest that those abstract features that result (especially) in the object-related effects may be underspecified.