

■ Table 13.1: Proposed Semantic Relations for Early Grammars

Relation	Definition and Examples
1. Nomination	The naming of a referent, without pointing, usually in response to the question “What’s that?” Often indicated with words such as “this,” “that,” “here,” “there.” (Also see (11) Demonstrative and Entity below.)
2. Recurrence	The reappearance of a referent already seen, a new instance of a referent class already seen, or an additional quantity of some mass already seen (e.g., “more” or “another” X).
3. Nonexistence	The disappearance of something that was in the visual field (e.g., “no hat,” “allgone egg”).
Semantic Functions	
4. Agent + Action	The agent is “someone or something, usually but not necessarily animate, which is perceived to have its own motivating force and to cause an action of process” (p. 193; e.g., “Adam go,” “car go,” “Susan off”).
5. Action + Object	The object is “someone or something (usually something, or inanimate) either suffering a change of state or simply receiving the force of an action” (p. 193).
6. Agent + Object	A relation that uses the two definitions above. It can be considered a direction relation without an intervening action.
7. Action + Location	“The place or locus of an action” (p. 194), as in “Tom sat in the chair.” Often marked by forms like “here” and “there.”
8. Entity + Locative	The specification of the location of an entity (i.e., any being or thing with a separate existence). These take a copula in adult English (e.g., “lady home,” meaning “The lady is home”).
9. Possessor + Possession	The specification of objects belonging to one person or another (e.g., “mommy chair”).
10. Entity + Attribute	The specification of “some attribute of an entity that could not be known from the class characteristics of the entity alone” (p. 197; e.g., “yellow block,” “little dog”).
11. Demonstrative and Entity	This is the same as (1) Nomination, except that the child points and uses a demonstrative.

Source: Data from Brown, R. (1973). *A first language: The early stages*. Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Press. As appears in Ingram, D. (1989). *First language acquisition: Method, description, and explanation*. Cambridge, UK: Cambridge University Press.