



The Development of Language

Chapter 9
Language Development



How do we develop the ability to communicate?

Class Objectives:

- What is language and its rule systems?
- How does language develop through the lifespan?

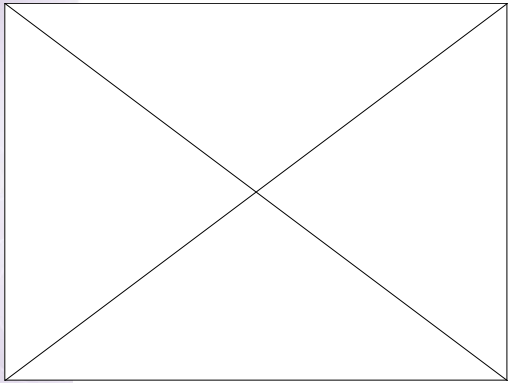
Exam 2 will be postponed

-When I return I will provide a new exam date or testing period. The study guide will be posted on the website this week.

What is Language?

A form of communication, whether spoken, written, or signed, that is based on a system of symbols

-Language is expressed through speech, writing and gesture.



Five Rules Systems of Language

- ☐ **Phonology**
 - The basic sound system of a language (*phonemes*)
- ☐ **Morphology**
 - The system of meaningful units involved in word formation (*morphemes*)
- ☐ **Syntax**
 - The system that involves the way words are combined to form acceptable phrases and sentences
- ☐ **Semantics**
 - The system that involves the meaning of words and sentences
- ☐ **Pragmatics**
 - The system of using appropriate conversation and knowledge of how to effectively use language in context

Understanding the Rule systems

- ☐ Children must learn to hear the differences in speech sounds and how to produce them.
- ☐ They must learn the meaning of words and rules for combining them into sentences
 - They must learn effective ways to talk with others

Phonemes



- ☐ The basic building blocks of language
 - The unique sounds that can be joined to create words
 - The sound of "p" in pin, pet, and pat
 - The sound of "b" in bed, bat, and bird
- ☐ Infants can distinguish many of these sounds, some of them as early as 1 month after birth
 - Newborns are biologically capable of hearing the entire range of phonemes in all languages worldwide
 - Can discriminate sounds they have never heard before such as phonemes from a foreign language

Infants use many tools to identify words in speech. They don't understand the meaning of the word yet, but they can recognize a word as a distinct configuration of sounds



The language environment for infants is not solely auditory. Much language exposure comes from face-to-face interaction with adults



Parents and adults help infants master language sounds by talking in a distinctive style

How do adults talk to infants?
How can this help infants master the language?



Adults Use *Infant-Directed Speech*

- ☐ Adults speak slowly and with exaggerated changes in pitch and loudness and elongated pauses between utterances
 - Also known as parentese, motherese, or child-directed speech
- ☐ Infant-directed speech may attract infants' attention more than adult-directed speech because its slower pace and accentuated changes provide the infant with more salient language cues
 - Helps infants perceive the sounds that are fundamental to their language

Speech Production



- ☐ At 2 months, infants begin making sounds that are language-based
 - Starts with *cooing*
- ☐ At 5 to 6 months, infants produce extended repetition of certain single syllables, Speech-like sound that have no meaning
 - Cooing turns into *babbling*
 - "ma-ma-ma, da-da-da, ba-ba-ba"
- ☐ At 7 months, babbling includes *intonation*
 - The pitch of their babbling first rises and then falls or the pitch starts flat and rises at the end


First Words

- ☐ Infants first *recognize* words, then they begin to *comprehend* words
 - Receptive vocabulary (words the child understands) considerably exceeds spoken vocabulary (words the child uses)
- ☐ At about 4 ½ months of age, infants will listen longer to a tape repeating their own name than to a tape of different but similar name

By their 1st birthday, infants usually say their first words, usually an extension of babbling.

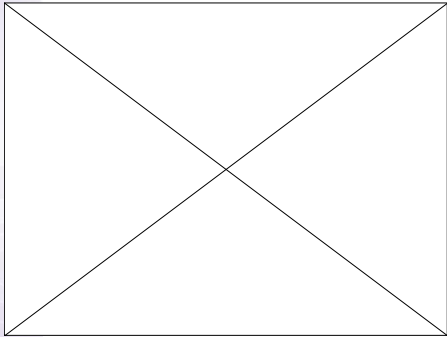
First words usually refer to important people, objects that move, familiar actions, or outcomes of familiar actions





At 6 months – if an infant hears either “mommy” or “daddy”, they look toward the appropriate person.

Language Development



Progression of Speech Production

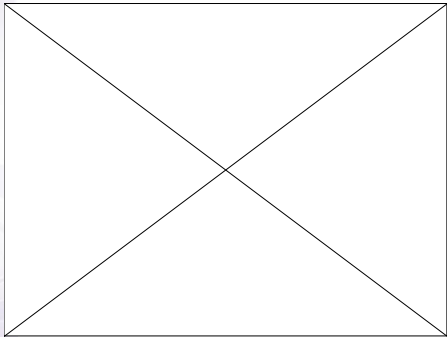


- By 2 years of age, most children have a vocabulary of a few hundred words
 - They experience their first vocabulary spurt between 18- and 20-months of age
 - They begin to produce simple sentences at about 18 months of age
- By 6 years of age, a child's vocabulary includes over 14,000 words

The rate of children's vocabulary development is influenced by the amount of talk they are exposed to. The more speech that is addressed to a toddler, the more rapidly the toddler will learn new words.



How Do We Learn New Words and Their Meanings?



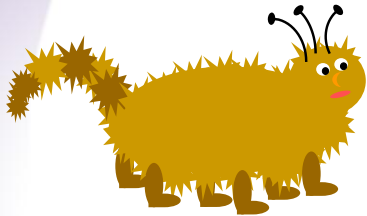
Word Comprehension

- ▣ *Fast Mapping* is the process of rapidly learning a new word simply from the contrastive use of a familiar word and an unfamiliar word
- ▣ The children's ability to connect new words to familiar words so rapidly that they cannot be considering all possible meaning for the new word

Give Fast-Mapping a try...



These questions will put you back in toddlers shoes. Answer the following questions on you own. Write your answers down!



1. This is a snurk. It walks on its flaxes. How many flaxes does a snurk have?
2. Snurks have twice as many flaxes as amopolinks. Where are the amopolinks?
3. Snurks are covered with garslim. Garslim is like _____?
4. Like dogs, snurks can wag their pangeers. Where is the pangeer?
5. Do you think snurks can bispooche? Why or why not?

Rules for Learning New Words

- ☐ If an unfamiliar word is heard in the presence of objects that already have names and objects that don't, the word refers to one of the objects that doesn't have a name
- ☐ A name refers to a whole object, not its parts or its relation to other objects, and refers not just to this particular object but to all objects of the same type
- ☐ If an object already has a name and another name is presented, the new name denotes a subcategory of the original name
- ☐ Given many similar category members, a word applied consistently to only one of them is a proper noun

As children are learning new words, they often make mistakes

What are some examples of this?



Early Errors in Language

- ☐ One common inaccuracy is underextension – using a word too narrowly.
 - Using the word “cat” to refer only to the family cat
 - Using the word “ball” to refer only to a favorite toy ball

Sarah refers to the blanket she sleeps with as “blankie”. When Aunt Ethel gives her a new blanket Sarah refuses to call the new one a “blankie” – she restricts that word only to her original blanket.



Overextension

☐ The use of a given word in a broader context than is appropriate

- Common between 1 and 3 years of age
- More common than Underextension

☐ Toddlers will apply the new word to a group of similar experiences

- “Open” – for opening a door, peeling fruit, or undoing shoelaces

Language Errors

☐ Children overextend because they have not acquired another suitable word or because they have difficulty remembering a more suitable word

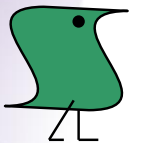
☐ Examples:

- Ball referring to ball, balloon, marble, egg, or apple
- Moon referring to moon, half-moon shaped lemon slice, or half a Cheerio
- Car referring to a car, bus, truck, or tractor
- Daddy referring to dad or any man
- Doggie referring to dog or any four-legged animal

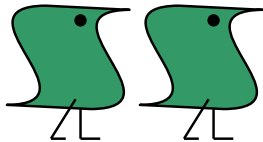
Making Sentences

- ☐ Most children begin to combine words into simple sentences by 18 to 24 months of age
- ☐ Children's first sentences are two-word combinations referred to as *Telegraphic speech*
 - Words directly relevant to meaning
- ☐ Words not critical to the meaning are left out – similar to the way telegrams were written.
 - These sentences are brief and to the point, containing only vital information
 - "More cookie", "Mommy go", "Daddy juice"

- ☐ By about 2 ½ years of age, children have the ability to produce more complex sentences (four or more words per sentence).
- ☐ The longer sentences are filled with *grammatical morphemes* (words or endings of words that make sentences more grammatical).
 - A 1 ½-year-old might say "kick ball" but a 3-year-old would be more likely to say "I am kicking the ball"



This is a wug.



Now there is another one.
 There are two of them.
 There are two _____.

Overregularization

☐ Speech errors in which children treat irregular forms of words as if they were regular.

- Applying rules to words that are exceptions to the rule
- This leads young children to talk about foots, toothes, sleeps, sheeps and mouses.

☐ Although technically wrong, Overregularization is a sign of verbal sophistication because it shows children are applying the rules to grammar.

Between 3 and 6 Years of Age

☐ Children learn to use negation

- "That isn't a butterfly"

☐ Children learn to use embedded sentences

- "Jennifer thinks that Bill took the book"

☐ Children begin to comprehend passive voice as opposed to active voice

- "The ball was kicked by the girl" as opposed to "The girl kicked the ball"

☐ By the time most children enter kindergarten, they use most of the grammatical forms of their native language with great skill

Pragmatics

☐ The practical knowledge needed to use language for communicative purposes

- Knowing how to ask for things
- Knowing how to tell a joke
- Knowing how to continue a conversation

☐ Social speech

- Speech intended to be understood by a listener



What's Next?

Language development continued...
