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Review, Practice, and Explore

RPE 2.1 Children's Rules

Children often produce forms that they don't hear in adult speech—forms that nevertheless follow a systematic rule. In the following examples of children's language, what systematic rule is evident here? How do these data support the human capacity for language? Do children learn by imitation?

- I buyed a fire dog for a grillion dollars.
- Hey, Horton hearded a Who.
- My teacher holded the baby rabbits and we patted them.
- Daddy, I stealed some of the people out of the boat.
- Once upon a time, a alligator was eating a dinosaur and the dinosaur was eating the alligator and the dinosaur was eaten by the alligator and the alligator goed kerplunk.

What do the following examples of conversations with children tell us about how children acquire language, and how do they provide evidence for our linguistic "hardwiring"?

Child: I taked a cookie.

Adult: Oh, you mean you took a cookie.

Child: Yes, that's right, I taked it.

Adult: Adam, say what I say: Where can I put them?

Child: Where I can put them?

RPE 2.2 Two-Year-Olds Have No Words

Even though children seem limited in the number of words they can string together in the early stages of acquisition, their utterances can express a range of complex meanings. For example, negative utterances at this stage can express denial, rejection, or nonexistence. Study the following sets of negative utterances of children in the early multiword stage. What kind of negation is being expressed in each set? (Adapted from Foss & Hakes 1978.)

- Allgone juice, no hot, no more light anymore play
- No dirty soap, no meat, no go outside
- No morning (it was afternoon), no daddy hungry, no truck

RPE 2.3 ➤ **Adult Speech to Children**

Here are some examples of interactions between adults and children. What kinds of correction or reinforcement does the adult offer the child? What does the adult *not* correct? Do you think these interactions might help or hinder language acquisition? Why?

Child: [picking up toys].

Adult: Thanks for picking up your toys!

Child: Sally goed to the store.

Adult: No, Sally went to *work*.

Child: Doggy gone.

Adult: Yes, Rover went for a walk with your sister.

Child: I want a cookie.

Adult: You want a cookie? Well, here you go!

Child: Him ride bike.

Adult: Yes, he's riding a bike.

RPE 2.4 ➤ **How Would They Say It?**

Here are some examples of issues that arise for speakers learning English as a second language. Based on the information given about each language, try to come up with what the learner might say. (Adapted from Haussamen 2003.)

- In Vietnamese, there is no article before the word for a profession (*student, teacher, doctor, etc.*). What is a sentence a Vietnamese speaker learning English might say?
- In Korean, pronouns aren't marked for gender, so you might hear a Korean speaker learning English use *it* in places where native English speakers might not. What is a possible sentence the Korean speaker might utter?
- In Japanese, pronouns don't have to match the noun they refer to, so a singular pronoun can refer to a plural noun and vice versa. What kind of sentence might a Japanese speaker learning English utter?
- In Cantonese, Japanese, and Korean, there are no plural forms of nouns (plurality is marked in other ways). What sentence might a speaker of one of these languages who is learning English produce?

RPE 2.5 ➤ **Acquiring or Teaching a Second Language**

Explore one of the following questions about second language acquisition in more detail in a short research paper.

- What are some of the leading theories about how we acquire a second language, and how do these theories differ from one another?
- What are some of the theories about how to teach a second "foreign" language (now more frequently called *world language*) in school?
- Investigate English as a Second Language (ESL), Teaching English as a Second Language (TESL), and Teaching English to Speakers of Other Languages (TESOL). What are some of the theories about how to teach English language in a multilingual classroom?

- How does the U.S. system differ from the Canadian or British systems? How are heritage languages (the speakers' first language, or L1) treated in such systems?

RPE 2.6 Bilingual Education

Bilingualism is a fascinating linguistic phenomenon of interest not only to linguists but also to educators. Bilingual education is both much studied and controversial. Many states and organizations want to limit bilingual education, and other organizations and states promote it. Do some research on the pros and cons of bilingual education. What are the arguments in favor of it, and what methods and approaches seem to be most effective? Where has bilingual education been argued to be ineffective, and why?

RPE 2.7 Creole Grammar

Some tourist guidebooks describe pidgins and creoles as *baby talk*, *broken English*, *improper*, or *grammarless*. But as we've seen, creole languages have systematic rules and are fully developed linguistic systems. Below is a set of data that illustrate the rule of plural formation in Nicaraguan Creole English (from Honda and O'Neil 2008).

Nicaraguan Creole English

- The boat-dem de in the river.
- Ronald send to me two turtledove.
- Is many dog in Bluefields?
- These dog-dem in the street.
- He want seven case of beer.
- He did see the case of beer-dem.

Standard English

The boats are in the river.
 Ronald sent me two turtledoves.
 Are there many dogs in Bluefield?
 These dogs are in the street.
 He wants seven cases of beer.
 He saw the cases of beer.

The word *dem* is borrowed from the English word *them*; however, it has a different meaning and use in Nicaraguan Creole English. When do you use *-dem* in Creole?

Is the following sentence grammatical in this language?

- The man-dem a plaant kann.

The men are planting corn.

RPE 2.8 Linguistic Savants

The Linguistic Society of America maintains an archive of language-related short videos at the University of Georgia. At the website <http://www.uga.edu/lava/Smith/Smith.html> are several clips about Christopher taken from the movie *Het Talenwonder*. Watch the clips and write a one- to two-paragraph response. Consider what Christopher's language ability tells us about the following:

- the human capacity for language
- our language "intelligence" and its relation to other cognitive abilities
- Universal Grammar

RPE 2.9 Genie Says

Here are some examples of the speech of Genie, the child who was not exposed to language until age 13. Her speech has been described as *agrammatic*. What kinds of word order errors does Genie make, and does her speech resemble aphasia in any way? Does it resemble any of the stages of acquisition we've discussed in the chapter? Explain. (Data from Curtiss 1977: 31.)

Adult: Where are the graham crackers?

Genie: I where is graham cracker.

(or)

I where is graham cracker on top shelf.

Genie's way of forming questions:

Where is tomorrow Mrs L?

Where is stop spitting?

Where is may I have ten pennies?

When is stop spitting?

Other examples of Genie's language:

Man motorcycle have.

Genie full stomach.

Genie bad cold live father house.

Want Curtiss play piano.

Open door key.

RPE 2.10 Broca's and Wernicke's Aphasias

Look up some examples of aphasic speech. Find examples of both Broca's aphasia and Wernicke's aphasia and also of one other disorder we have discussed here (agraphia, alexia, anomia). Explain how each of your examples fits the description of a particular type of aphasia or language disorder.

RPE 2.11 Sign Language Aphasia

Conduct some research on sign language aphasia. How does it differ from oral language aphasia, and how it is similar? What does sign language aphasia tell us about the brain and how it is lateralized for language?

Chapter at a Glance

Phonetics: Describing Sounds

Key Concepts

- You know a great deal about the complex sounds and the sound system of English; much of this knowledge is not something you usually need to think about, as you produce and manipulate the sounds of your language effortlessly.
- There is not a one-to-one correspondence between sound and spelling, so linguists use a system for describing the sounds of language in which each sound is represented by a single symbol.
- Sounds can be classified into groups based on similarities in the ways they are produced.
- Each language has a distinct set of phonemes, the sounds of a language that result in meaning differences in that language.
- Sounds change and vary over time in patterned ways.

Did You Know . . . ?

Visible Speech
Mom Is Bob

Language Alive! A Disappearing Sound

Why Do We Spell Words with *-ough*?
Forgotten Clusters
Do *Dawn* and *Don Rhyme*?
Double Is Not Long

Linguistics in the News Peter Ladefoged, Pioneer in Phonetics

Accent on Product Naming

Sounds and Symbols

Phonemes

Consonants

Voiced and Voiceless Consonants
Place of Articulation
Manner of Articulation
Why All These Distinctions?
Slips of the Tongue

Vowels

Diphthongs
Syllabic Consonants
Other Vowel Distinctions
Vowel Shifts

Phonemes and Allophones

Summary

Sources and Resources

Review, Practice, and Explore