

CHAPTER ONE

The Development of Language

MULTIPLE CHOICE QUESTIONS

- a. Studies of newborn babies have shown that
 - a. newborns pay equal attention to the language they heard *in utero* as to other languages.
 - b. newborns have not yet acquired interest in language.
 - c. newborns prefer to hear the language they heard *in utero*.
 - d. newborns are already equipped with all the communicative skills that underlie language.
- b. Studies of grammatical development have shown that
 - a. each child has a unique order and rate of acquisition.
 - b. the order of acquisition of grammatical forms depends on frequency of the forms in the parents' speech.
 - c. all children acquire grammatical forms at essentially the same rate.
 - d. most children learning a language acquire the forms in essentially the same order.
- 3) Recent research on the language abilities of dogs has shown that a border collie named Chaser
 - a. could recognize over 1000 words, and infer that a new name belonged to a new object.
 - b. acquired hundreds of words but when she heard an unfamiliar name she looked to her trainer for clues.
 - c. knew the names of dozens of her toys and could say these words in a singsong voice.
 - d. could use a translation device called BowLingual to communicate her basic needs in English.
- 4) Research on the genetic bases of language suggests that
 - a. there is a single gene, FOXP2, that accounts for the complexity and robustness of human language.
 - b. the gene FOXP2 is related to language and is probably the result of a mutation that occurred in our ancestors about 120,000 years ago.
 - c. humans and chimpanzees share the same versions of FOXP2 and related genes.
 - d. there are no genes related to language and speech, despite previous claims.
- 5) Reconstructions of the vocal tracts of our prehistoric ancestors indicate that
 - a. Neanderthal women and men had vocal capacities similar to our own.
 - b. Neanderthal people could probably sing clearly, but not speak.
 - c. the rapid, clear speech common to all modern humans was not possible for Neanderthals.
 - d. compared to Neanderthal people, the modern larynx has been greatly raised.
- 6) The role of special features of child-directed speech is emphasized by
 - a. cognitive interactionists.
 - b. gestural and usage-based theorists.
 - c. phoneticians.
 - d. social interactionists.
- 7) Modern imaging studies are able to show brain activity during language processing. Which of the following measures the changes in hemoglobin levels that accompany the increased blood flow to active areas?
 - a. NIRS, or Near-Infrared Spectroscopy
 - b. fMRI, or functional magnetic resonance imaging
 - c. ERPs, or event-related potentials
 - d. MEG, or magnetoencephalography
- 8) A research study that follows the same children over a period of time to observe how their language develops is
 - a. a developmental study.
 - b. a longitudinal study.
 - c. an incremental study.
 - d. a cross-sectional study.
- 9) All true languages are said to be characterized by productivity,
 - a. semanticity and replacement.

- b. semanticity and displacement.
 - c. specificity and generativity.
 - d. specificity and iconicity.
- 10) Children who are at the two-word stage in different language communities produce utterances that
- a. contain basic grammatical words like articles.
 - b. can refer to the past, but not the future.
 - c. have universal characteristics.
 - d. reflect characteristics special to their native language.
- 11) The primary reason researchers decided to try to teach chimpanzees American Sign Language rather than a spoken language was that
- a. sign language is structurally less complex than spoken languages.
 - b. chimpanzees have a natural tendency to imitate movement.
 - c. chimpanzees do not have the articulatory and physiological ability that spoken languages require.
 - d. sign language is more flexible semantically than spoken languages.
- 12) When adults speak to babies they may be activating the infants' neural patterns for language. This is one of the implications of the discovery of
- a. Broca's area.
 - b. mirror neurons.
 - c. the angular gyrus.
 - d. the gene called FOXP2.
- 13) Alex was a remarkable African grey parrot who was able to
- a. ask for crackers and nuts in several unrelated languages.
 - b. recognize colors, shapes and numbers of objects and answer questions about them in English.
 - c. sing Italian operatic arias in both perfect pitch and with a perfect accent.
 - d. correctly name pictures of hundreds of other kinds of birds about 80% of the time.
- 14) The use of language to express one's intentions and get things done in the world is called
- a. pragmatics.
 - b. communicative competence.
 - c. semantics.
 - d. emphatics.
- 15) In most right-handed individuals, specialized language areas of the brain are in
- a. the right hemisphere.
 - b. the left hemisphere.
 - c. the frontal lobes.
 - d. the occipital lobes.
- 16) All of the following words are likely to be used by a child in the one word stage **EXCEPT**
- a. juice
 - b. idea
 - c. up
 - d. bus
- 17) Damage to Broca's area of the brain is most strongly associated with
- a. difficulty in understanding language.
 - b. difficulty in spatial visualization.
 - c. difficulty in producing fluent and grammatical language.
 - d. Asperger's syndrome.

- 18) The smallest units of meaning in a language are called
- morphemes.
 - phonemes.
 - syntactic structures.
 - the lexicon.
- 19) Adam, Eve and Sarah were
- nineteenth century “wild children” who never developed language.
 - chimpanzees taught to use ASL in a Carnegie Mellon University study.
 - researchers on the neurology of speech in the 60s.
 - subjects in a famous language acquisition study at Harvard University.
- 20) Knowing when to use a direct request and when to use an indirect one is part of what is referred to as
- syntactic knowledge.
 - communicative competence.
 - semantic knowledge.
 - literacy knowledge.
- 21) A person with brain damage whose speech is fluent but filled with nonsense words might have
- Broca’s aphasia.
 - Wernicke’s aphasia.
 - specific language impairment.
 - a defect in semanticity and displacement.
- 22) Research in child language acquisition in the 60s focused primarily on
- context.
 - grammar.
 - phonology.
 - pragmatics.
- 23) An understanding of the syntactic system of a language
- allows speakers to modify the way they talk depending on whom they are speaking to
 - allows speakers to differentiate between similar sounds in a language
 - allows speakers to generate an almost unlimited number of grammatically correct sentences
 - allows speakers to define words accurately
- 24) Human language can be said to have a biological base because
- humans have areas in the brain that are specialized for language.
 - children will learn language even if no one speaks to them.
 - very young children use vocalizations to make their wishes known.
 - children’s first words are related to bodily functions.
- 25) CHILDES is
- an interactive computer program that enables language-delayed children to communicate with their caregivers.
 - a web-based program including a database of transcriptions of child language and programs to analyze child language.
 - a world renowned child language laboratory based at Harvard University.
 - an organization of psycholinguists dedicated to the study of child language development.
- 26) The linguist’s term *competence* refers to
- an individual’s inner or mental knowledge of a language and all its grammatical rules.
 - the ability read, write, speak, or listen, as the occasion demands.
 - knowledge of how to analyze language, to diagram sentences and recognize parts of speech.
 - the ability to speak in a fluent and effective manner.

- 27) Recent research shows that African elephants can communicate with one another at a distance in which way?
- supersonically, through extremely high pitched sounds that are similar to dog whistles
 - by flapping their large ears in particular patterns
 - subsonically, through deep rumbles that are carried through the ground
 - by marking messages on trees with their tusks
- 28) When a speaker who knows a language well makes a grammatical error in conversation, this is
- probably a performance error, unrelated to linguistic competence.
 - evidence that the language is highly complex and constantly changing.
 - proof that all speakers of a language are not equally well-versed in its rules.
 - evidence that the speaker's personal linguistic style is still evolving.

TRUE/FALSE QUESTIONS

- Normal children in every part of the world acquire the major components of their language by the time they are three or four.
- Children who are bilingual may have some advantages in the acquisition of metalinguistic skills.
- Children whose native language contains difficult sounds and complex phonological rules, such as Chinese, learn to speak somewhat later than children whose native languages are relatively less complex.
- Very young children in the one-word stage are more likely to refer to objects that are stationary than to objects that move.
- Recent research studies using bonobo chimpanzees has indicated that bonobos are able to grasp the pragmatic rules of language as well as or better than young children.
- Almost all right-handed individuals have their language functions in the left hemisphere, whereas only about half of all left handed people are left-lateralized for language.
- Normally developing children start to learn to talk at about the same time as they learn to walk.
- Children with autism spectrum disorders generally have normal patterns of language development.
- By the time they are six months old, babies have already begun to categorize the sounds of their own language.
- The action of mirror neurons may be one of the reasons why, if you stick your tongue out at a newborn baby she then sticks her tongue out at you.

SHORT ANSWER QUESTIONS

- Define *communicative competence*
 - Describe briefly one experiment that tried to teach language to a chimpanzee. Did it work? Why or why not?
- 3) Explain why some researchers are skeptical about the actual language abilities of animals that have been trained to recognize various words and commands. What might make it appear that they are comprehending language, when really something else is going on?
- 4) In the word *carpetbaggers*, how many morphemes are there? What are they?
- 5) What is a free morpheme? What is a bound morpheme? Give examples.
- 6) What is meant by the term *metalinguistic awareness*? Do young children have it?
- 7) Give an example of how pragmatics might govern the way one makes a request of a young child, as opposed to how one might make the same request of a Superior Court Judge.

- 8) What are the standard characteristics of Broca's aphasia? What causes it?
- 9) Define lateralization as it relates to brain function and language ability.

ESSAY QUESTIONS

1. Describe briefly one area of the brain that is known to be involved in language processing, with particular reference to the consequences of damage to that area.
2. Discuss the evidence that our language is *species specific* and *species unique*.
3. Contrast the term *communicative competence* with *linguistic competence*, with particular reference to the tasks faced by a language-learning child.
4. You want to conduct research on a question such as "at what stage and in what sequence do children acquire tag questions in English." Discuss the advantages of using computerized programs for the analysis of child language.
5. Historically, parents have conducted studies of their children's developing language by keeping detailed diaries. Discuss the advantages and possible shortcomings of this method.

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MULTIPLE CHOICE QUESTIONS

1. Answer: c. Page 2
2. Answer: d. Page 3
3. Answer: a. Page 11
4. Answer: b. Page 15
5. Answer: a. Page 15
6. Answer: d. Page 4
7. Answer: a. Page 20
8. Answer: b. Page 21
9. Answer: b. Page 10-11
10. Answer: c. Page 3
11. Answer: c. Page 12
12. Answer: b. Page 16
13. Answer: b. Page 11
14. Answer: a. Page 9
15. Answer: b. Page 16
16. Answer: b. Page 3
17. Answer: c. Page 16
18. Answer: a. Page 7
19. Answer: d. Page 19
20. Answer: b. Page 9
21. Answer: b. Page 17
22. Answer: b. Page 19
23. Answer: c. Page 8
24. Answer: a. Page 16
25. Answer: b. Page 23
26. Answer: a. Page 6
27. Answer c: Page 10
28. Answer: a. Page 6

TRUE/FALSE QUESTIONS

1. TRUE
2. TRUE
3. FALSE
4. FALSE
5. FALSE
6. TRUE
7. TRUE
8. FALSE
9. TRUE
10. TRUE