

<http://www.psychologicalscience.com/2010/10/kosik-pronounces-7-words-in-korean.html>

Acquiring Language

Language is defined as the combination of gestured, spoken, and/or written words to communicate meaning. The building blocks of any language are the following:

Phoneme: the smallest *sound* unit. For example, in the word "fish" there are 3 phonemes: f, i, sh

Morpheme: the smallest *meaningful* unit (this includes prefixes and suffixes). For example, I, a, dog, -ed, un-, me are all morphemes.

Grammar: the rules in a language that allow us to properly understand it. Two types of grammatical rules are semantics and syntax.

a. **Semantics:** grammatical rules that we use to derive *meaning*
For example, when you add an "ed" to the end of a verb it becomes an action of the past.

b. **Syntax:** grammatical rules that enable us to properly *combine words* into meaningful sentences. An example would be the placement of an adjective before the noun in the English language.

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Stages of Language Development

1. Babbling Stage: (3-4 months after birth) the stage in speech development where the infant utters a variety of spontaneous sounds. This is not an imitation of adult speech and babbling sounds are the same in any culture.

2. One-word stage: (1-2 years old) the stage in speech development where the infant speaks only single words to communicate an idea. For instance, "milk!" may mean, "I would like a glass of milk!"

3. Two-word stage: (2 years old) Infants speak in two-word phrases that resemble **Telegraphic** speech - speech like a "telegram". For example: want ball, me play, ...etc.

<http://video.google.com/videoplay?docid=-325774904703447042#>

http://www.ted.com/talks/patricia_kuhl_the_linguistic_genius_of_babies.html

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When explaining language development two theorists' views are helpful.

Behaviorist B.F. Skinner explains that language is *learned* through associations and imitation.

Noam Chomsky, a linguist, suggests that we are all born with the *capacity for language* and that a child's brain is *pre-wired* for to look for grammatical rules.

Research shows that we are born with a readiness to learn grammatical rules and that a child's experiences cause a gradual change in the brain's neural network connections.

Research Notes:
-A child can learn any language and will spontaneously invent meaningful words to communicate their wishes. However, after age 7, the ability to master a new language greatly declines.
-For both deaf and hearing children, later than usual exposure to sign language or another language will result in lack of fluency in that language.
-Brain scans reveal that the brain records the learning of a second language in very different brain areas dependant on the age of the learner.

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Thinking and Language

Benjamin Lee Whorf's Linguistic Relativity

- language determines how we think. This is most evident in people who speak two or more languages. For instance, a person who speaks English and Japanese will feel differently depending on which language they are using. English has many words describing personal emotions and Japanese has many words describing inter-personal emotions. It may be more correct to say that language influences how we think.







examples...?

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Language influences thinking and thinking influences language...

Doublespeak...

Can you translate these examples of doublespeak?

social expression products	
poorly buffered precipitation	
oral hygiene appliance	
negative patient care outcome	
automotive internist	
sanitary engineer	

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Thinking without Language (10-9 page 21 TR)

Thinking does occur without language.

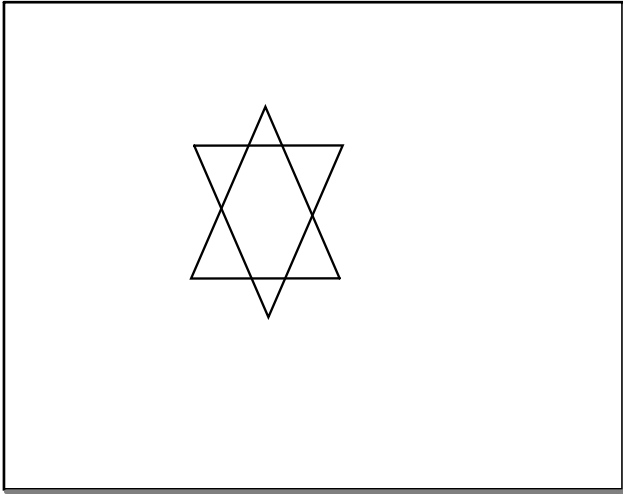
For example...

- mental practice (sports, music, figure skating...)
- thinking in image (artists, composers, mathematicians...)

Note the following research findings on animal communication:

- Animals also communicate, whether by means of sound or behavior just as bees dictate the location of nectar with an elaborate dance. <http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=-7ijl-g4jHg>
- Allen Gardner and Beatrice Gardner, researchers of University of Nevada, successfully taught a chimpanzee to perform sign language as a means of communication. They do not however have the same facility for language as humans.
- The research of Sue Savage-Rumbaugh showed that chimps were capable of understanding the semantic differences of spoken English and that chimps also had a "critical period" in which such language must be learned if they are to gain language competency and fluency. <http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=4Irv1CrGq3o>

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