

# Language Development



# Babies and Infants



- 4 mos.
  - Discriminate between some sounds and can babble
    - <http://youtu.be/7RqUTJAfy48>
- 6 mos.
  - Responds to name, other human voices
  - Responds appropriately to pleasant or angry tones
- 1 yr.
  - Uses one or more words with intent – no, mom, dad, up, etc.
  - Understands simple instructions
  - Understands inflection
    - [http://youtu.be/\\_NZMJBMUHU8](http://youtu.be/_NZMJBMUHU8)

# Toddlers



- **1 1/2 yrs.**
  - Vocabulary of 5-20 words
  - Echoalia develops
    - ✦ Repeating a sound over and over
- **2 yrs.**
  - Vocabulary of 150-300 words
  - Begins to use 1-3 word sentences (mean is 1.2)
  - Begins to use pronouns
  - 2/3 of words can be understood by a stranger
  - Can name a number of objects common to his or her surroundings
    - ✦ Chair, dog, siblings
    - <http://youtu.be/UrRKLHq25UA>

# Children



- 3 yrs.
  - Vocabulary of 1000 words
  - 90% of words can be understood by a stranger
  - Uses pronouns (I, you, me) and prepositions (in, on, under)
    - [http://youtu.be/gd3JTyQBQ\\_E](http://youtu.be/gd3JTyQBQ_E)
- 5 yrs.
  - Knows all letters, can count up to 10
  - Understands simple time concepts
    - ✦ Yesterday, today, tomorrow, morning, afternoon, tonight
  - Can use compound, complex sentences
    - <http://youtu.be/svE6ff9hBQI>

# Two Theories



- We hear language all the time, from everyone around us
- How do we figure out the rules?
  - David ate the nachos.  
Noun verb object.
  - Grammar rules
- Do we listen to others and figure it out or do we have a special language center in the brain?

# Nativist Theory – Noam Chomsky



- **Just hearing language is not enough.**
  - We learn language despite incomplete info from our environment
- **Some aspects of people are innate (inside all of us)**
  - Not all knowledge is gained from the senses
  - We have a structure in our minds as soon as we are born
  - We understand cause and effect, we avoid high places and hot objects
- **People have a LAD (Language Acquisition Device)**
  - Something you're born with – the structure to learn
  - Instinctual – we don't get direct instruction in language

# Empiricist Theory



- Knowledge comes from sensory input we experience
  - Emphasize evidence and scientific method
- Tabula Rasa
  - We start off as “blank slates”
  - Parents and caregivers adopt Child Directed Speech (CDS)
- Social-Interactionist Theory
  - We learn language as well as our caregivers interact with us.
  - The process of hearing and trying to speak back is how we learn

# Nativism vs. Empiricism



- Which theory sounds right to you?

# References



- Child Development Institute. (2013). [http://childdevelopmentinfo.com/child-development/language\\_development.shtml](http://childdevelopmentinfo.com/child-development/language_development.shtml)