

Psych56L/ Ling51

Winter 2014

Review Questions: Special Populations

- (1) Terms/concepts to know: ASL, simultaneous articulation, deaf-of-deaf, deaf-of-hearing, manual tradition, oral tradition, total communication, cochlear implants
- (2) Are signs in ASL atomic units, or are they broken up into features the way that some parts of spoken languages are? What is one major difference between spoken and signed languages when it comes to features?
- (3) Do ASL speakers have categorical perception? How do you know?
- (4) Why might it be surprising that deaf children learning sign language take a while to understand what the signs for “you” and “I” refer to? Does their performance on these signs support the idea that learning a signed language is the same as learning a spoken language? Why or why not?
- (5) Why are deaf children trained in the oral tradition at a disadvantage with respect to achieving native-level skill in a language when compared to deaf children trained in the manual tradition?
- (6) How does the syntactic and lexical development of blind children compare to that of sighted children?
- (7) One view of language acquisition believes that language development builds on nonverbal communication and the observable nonlinguistic context, such as visual cues. Would this view find blind children with good language problematic? Why or why not?
- (8) How can mentally retarded children’s language development help us answer the question of whether language is a separate (domain-specific) ability?
- (9) Describe the basic profile of a typical Williams Syndrome child. How does this differ from the profile of a typical Down syndrome child?
- (10) Does Williams Syndrome, and the linguistic development of children who have it, support the dissociability of language and general intelligence? Why or why not?
- (11) Explain how having more brain space devoted to language may actually lead to poorer language development. (Hint: Think of Karmiloff-Smith et al. 1997).
- (12) What is one major difference between Williams Syndrome and Down Syndrome individuals when it comes to language abilities?
- (13) What is one major difference between Williams Syndrome and Down Syndrome individuals when it comes to visuospatial abilities?