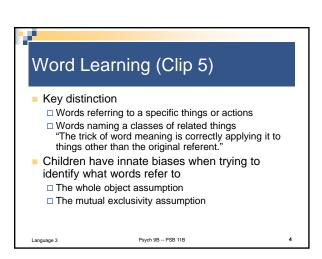


Does it puzzle you how, if so many aspects of language are innate, there exist so many different languages?
 A. Yes
 B. No



Key Point: Word Learning
Differs from Rule Learning

The process of word learning is different from the rest of language acquisition

A large, but finite number of words to learn
Identifying a relatively small number of rules allows us to comprehend and produce an infinite number of sentences

Summary: Menya and What they Help us to Understand (Clip 6)

All the world's languages are complex
Regardless of level of technological complexity of the culture speaking it

The world's languages all share organizational traits
Even where their speakers have lived in isolation from the world at large for millennia

Features Found in All Languages: Universal Grammar (Clip 7)

- Languages are structured in one of two ways to convey meaning
- Division of words into those which refer to objects and those which refer to actions
- A distinction between one and more than one object
- A way to indicate when actions happened
- A way to make things negative
- A way to ask a question

Language 3

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Universal Grammar (UG) is Biologically Deteremined (Clip 8)

- Human brain is pre-wired to accept only certain kinds of languages
- Those things that are true of all languages are the candidates for the components of UG
- Pinker: What children have to pick up is not the fact that languages have rules, but rather the particular versions of the rules the language they are acquiring has, e.g. whether the ordering of words put the verb before the object or the object before the verb.

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Over-Regularization of the Past Tense (Clip 9)

- In English regular verbs form the past tense by adding the morpheme –ed
- Some verbs are irregular
- Initially, children learn the past tense of just a few verbs and they use the correct forms
- Later, children learn the rule for regular verbs and, initially, try to apply it to all verbs – over generalizing
- Eventually, they sort out the two verb classes

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Regularity of Errors (Clip 10)

- The errors made by children learning languages are not random
- Observation/Claim: Children only produce "errors" that are consistent with UG
 - ☐ The errors that children make represent constructions that would be possible in some language, just not their own

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Overall Summary: (Clip 11) Is Language Learned or Innate?

- Language: A set of symbols and principles for combining these symbols that allow for communication and comprehension.
- Answer Both

The elements of language form a continuum

- □ Symbols (words) are learned
- □ Principles (i.e., rules of syntax and mapping of semantics) are selected from "pre-wired" alternatives
- □ Phonology is selected from whatever is available

Language 3

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Looking Forward

- Chapter test on Language is Wednesday
- For Monday
 - ☐ Gleitman: Ch. 10, pp. 408 421
- I do not have time for coffee today

Thinking 4

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