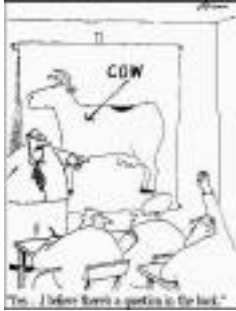


## Language Acquisition Part II



Noun learning &  
Grammar

03.15.01

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## Outline

- ◆ Review
- ◆ More early word learning
- ◆ Development of syntax
- ◆ Critical periods

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## Review

- ◆ Theories of language learning
  - Learning theory
  - Nativist theory
  - Interactionist account
- ◆ Early word learning

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## In Class Assignment

- ◆ For each theory, give one piece of supporting evidence:
  - Learning Theory
  - Nativist Theory
  
- ◆ Describe the evidence and justify your answer.

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## Overextensions

- ◆ Using a word to refer to standard referents and others.
  - "Daddy"
  - Used for father, mailman, doctor, etc.



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## Underextensions

- ◆ Limiting the use of a word to a subset of the conventional referents.
  - "Cat"
  - Family cat, but not other cats



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## Extending nouns

- ◆ Nouns typically refer to a whole category of objects.
- ◆ How do children determine what objects should be named with the same label?
  - Texture?
  - Color?
  - Shape?

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## Methodology 1

Wug



Get me another wug.



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## Results

- ◆ Nouns refer to categories of same-shaped things.
- ◆ Is this bias specific to language?

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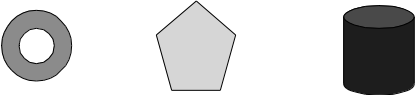
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### Methodology 2

Exemplar 

Get me one like this one.




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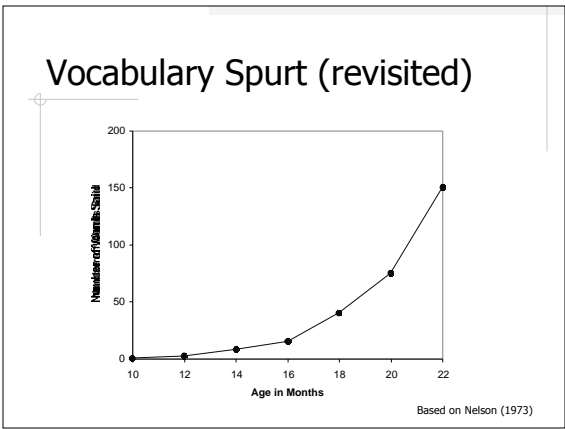
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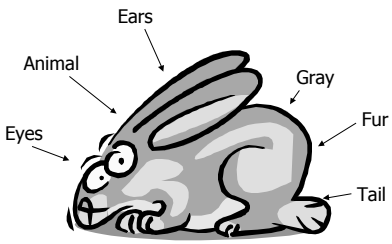
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### Quine Dilemma

Rabbit




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## Constraints

- ◆ Whole-object principle



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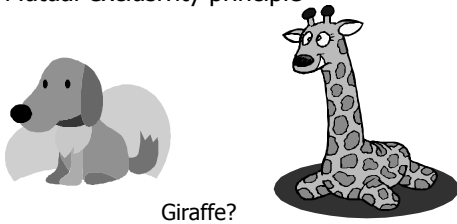
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## Constraints

- ◆ Whole-object principle
- ◆ Mutual-exclusivity principle



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## Review

- ◆ Early word learning
  - Errors
  - Extending labels
  - Constraints

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## Cognition and Language

- ◆ Down's Syndrome
  - Restricted vocabulary
  - Simplistic grammar



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## Cognition and Language

- ◆ Down's Syndrome
  - Restricted vocabulary
  - Simplistic grammar
- ◆ William's Syndrome
  - Cognitive deficits
  - Fluent conversationalists



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## Film: William's Syndrome

Things to think about:

- Cognitive deficits
- Language skills
- Nature & Nurture



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## Grammar

- ◆ Differentiates humans from apes
- ◆ Multi-word utterances
- ◆ Critical period

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## Understanding word order



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## Holophrases

- ◆ Single words can communicate whole ideas?



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## First word combinations

- ◆ 18 months
- ◆ Telegraphic
  - Mommy throw.
  - Daddy shoe.
  - See dog.

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## Critical periods in grammar

- ◆ Johnson & Newport (1989)
- ◆ Korean and Chinese immigrants learning English as second language.
- ◆ Variable:
  - Age of arrival



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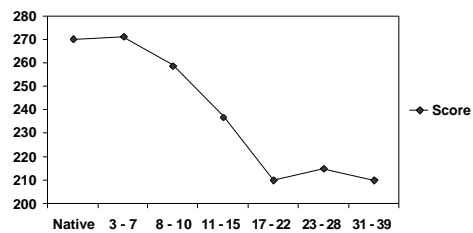
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## Johnson & Newport (1989)



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## Film: Genie



Things to think about:

- ◆ Genie's language
- ◆ Critical periods in language learning
- ◆ Theoretical implications

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## In-Class Assignment

- ◆ Classify each of these abilities according to when they emerge...
  - 0-6 months
  - 6-12 months
  - 12-18 months
  - 18-24 months
- ◆ Says 1<sup>st</sup> word.
- ◆ Multi-word utterances (including function words).
- ◆ Distinguishes native language from foreign.
- ◆ Rapid acceleration in vocabulary size.
- ◆ Understands 1<sup>st</sup> word.

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