

Linguistic explanations of language



Rationalist/Nativist Model*Chomsky: a universal grammar is the essence of language

*universal grammar: A set of rules that applies to all human languages and can help generate new sentences with varied word combinations

*language is creative precisely because there are a finite set of rules

*Speakers have an innate knowledge of the universal grammar, not by learning or teaching

*Chomsky proposed that the innate knowledge children have of the universal grammar is contained in a hypothetical entity known as the Language Acquisition Device (LAD).

-LAD receives data about grammar of the particular input, children construct the grammar of their own language. LAD is used to describe the innate knowledge children have of the universal grammar

*Chomsky introduced the ideas of surface structure and deep structure

-Surface structure: the actual arrangement of words in syntactic order; it is the phrase or sentence that one hears

-Deep structure: underlying the surface structure which primarily contains the rules of sentence formation and the underlying meaning that sentence conveys. The Behavioral Model*Skinner: Language is a verbal behavior; he suggests that learning, not innate mechanisms, play a major role in the acquisition of verbal behaviors

*Language is learned like any other behavior; through operant conditioning, a process of reinforcing desirable responses and "punishing" undesirable responses

*that is that verbal behaviors are acquired under appropriate conditions of stimulation, response, and reinforcement

*this model focuses on the measurable and observable aspects of language behaviors and emphasizes performance over competence

*it is also believed that children only learn the language they are exposed to; severe social deprivation results in language deprivation as well.

*three causes that impel people to behave verbally:

1. Internal states: hunger, pain, thirst, physical, discomfort (something that motivates a fix)

2. External States: These come from the social and physical environment

3. Prior Verbal behaviors: something that is said causes you to say more

*Functional units of verbal behaviors: includes a category of verbal behavior and a cause that precedes it

ONLINGUISTIC EXPLANATIONS OF LANGUAGE SPECIFICALLY FOR YOU FOR ONLY \$13.90/PAGE Order Now Behavioral Model:

Functional Unit *Mands: requests, demands, commands; verbal responses

responses that have motivation states as causes and often specify their own reinforcers.

*Tacts: Descriptive statements; a group of verbal responses whose cause is a state of affairs in the environment and which are reinforced socially; sharing information

*Echoic: An imitative; a verbal response that recreates its own causal stimulus

*Intraverbals: What is said causes the speaker to say more; speech caused by the speaker's own speech

*Autoclitics: Elements of traditional grammar; Skinner said grammar is secondary to language; secondary verbal that describe or comment on certain aspects of primary verbal behaviors

*Textuals: Controlled by printed stimuli

Cognitive Theory (Piaget)*This model emphasizes cognition, or knowledge, and mental processes such as memory, attention, and visual and auditory perception

*The focus is on the child's regulation of learning and on internal aspects of behaviors

*According to this theory, language acquisition is made possible by cognitive operations that, in turn, lead to higher levels of language development; children must master the features of one stage in order to progress to the next. Mastery must occur in order but may show variation in the rate at which they progress through the stages Cognitive Theory Stages1.

Sensorimotor (0-2 years)

a. Substage 1: Birth- 2 month

-Child displays reflexive vocal behavior

-Child displays reflexive sensorimotor behavior

b. Substage 2: 2-4 months

-Child makes coordinated eye-hand movements

-Child makes coordinated hand-mouth movements

c. Substage 3: 4-8 months

-Child acts on objects and begins to search for objects

-Child imitates some sounds and babbles

d. substage 4: 8-12 months

- Child starts walking
- First word is used
- Child searches for objects based on memory of where she last saw it
- Child begins to recognize that he has the ability to cause objects to move

e. Substage 5: 12-18 months

- Object performance becomes evident
- Child walks with confidence
- Child may imitate another person's behavior
- Child experiments with the properties and functions of objects

f. Substage 6: 18-24 months

- Child uses words when referents are not present ("mommy" when she is not present)
- Child uses thought to solve problems
- Basic cause-effect relations are acquired
- child uses symbolic play

2. Preoperational (2-7 years)

a. Preconceptual (2-4 years)

- Child is egocentric; has difficulty taking perspectives of others
- Child over extends word meanings
- Child underextends word meaning

b. Intuitive (4-7)

- Egocentrism continues
- Child displays concreteness of thought
- Perceptions guide thoughts
- Child deals with only one variable at a time

-Classification skills have improved but are still inadequate

-Child displays lack of conservation

3. Concrete Operations (7-11 years)

a. Child is less egocentric, has increasing ability to see others' point of views

b. Child acquires seriation and conversation skills

c. child employs causality

d. Child uses effective classification skills

4. Formal Operations (11+ years)

a. Child displays lack of egocentricity, is able to see other's point of views

b. Child displays ability to think and speak in the abstract

c. Child can use inductive and deductive through processes

d. Child can use verbal reasoning and make " if... then" statements

e. Child is able to use hypothetical reasoning