

Language analysis essay



**ASSIGN
BUSTER**

In this exercise, review the following examples of language use by children and decide whether it best supports the position of B. F. Skinner or Noam Chomsky. Then explain your reasoning.

1. While Marie and her mother are looking at a book together, Marie's mother shows her a picture of an animal and says `cos.` Marie says `cow,` and her mother praises her for her correct utterance. Later, Marie spontaneously points to a picture and correctly identifies it as a cow.

Position supported: B. F. Skinner's environmental position

Explanation:

The example clearly demonstrates the theories of B. F. Skinner in the development of language. Marie was able to correctly recognize the picture of a cow from that of "cos" that her mother pointed out. When her mother praised her for her correct response, it reinforced the correctness of her response. After which, she correctly identifies the picture of the cow without the help of her mother. This demonstrated the process of operant conditioning and how language is learned through one's environment and experiences (Myers, 2006). The ability of the child to say cow correctly after being praised by the mother showed that the child was able to associate the correct word to the object and learns to distinguish it from other objects. 2. When his day-care teacher asks 2 year old Jack what he did last Saturday, he responds with, `We goed to the zoo.` His teacher smiles, marveling at the fact that all children Jack's age make this type of grammatical error.

Position supported: Chomsky's nature position

Explanation:

Chomsky theorized that language is developed as a basic developmental skill that is programmed into our brains just as walking is (Myers, 2006). In the given scenario, it was shown that Jack used the word “goed” which the teacher observed was made by most children at that age. This suggests that the teacher believes that the development of language follows a progressive pattern based on age and maturation, similar to how an infant first learns to crawl and then walk. Thus, incorrectly pronounced words at this age are normal and they seem to outgrow it in a few years.