

Skinner's theory of Operant Learning for explaining language development

Skinner, who was a Behaviorist, argued that language acquisition is like any kind of cognitive behavior – it is learnt by reinforcement and shaping. He also calls this operant conditioning – where the child goes through trial-and-error, in other words, where the child tries and fails to use correct language until it succeeds; with reinforcement and shaping provided by the parents gestures (smiles, attention and approval) which are pleasant to the child. Parents, whom ignore unfamiliar sounds and show increased attention to the reinforced phonemes, extinguish the acquisition of phonemes and morphemes. The morphemes then become refined into words by shaping. Parents' accuracy will lead to total extinguishment of "baby" pronunciation and finally, by selective reinforcement and behavior shaping, words will be shaped into telegraphic two-word sentences, later into sentences until the full language has been acquired. Skinner differentiated between two types of verbal responses that a child makes. One of them, the mand is verbal behavior that is reinforced by the child receiving something it wants. For example, when the child sees a chocolate, it can show its own demand by calling out "choc". As the child used appropriate verbal behavior, he then receives chocolate and reinforcement. The other one is tact, which is verbal behavior caused by imitating others. For instance, when a parent points at an object and says "ball", the child imitates this word and the parent will then approve, which is just another form of reinforcement.

Chomsky's theory of Inborn Grammar for explaining language development

Chomsky, who was a linguist, argues that the ability of language acquisition is innate; therefore taking a biological approach-stand. Children will automatically acquire language by being exposed to it. There is no need for operant conditioning. This ability is supported by, what Chomsky calls a LAD (innate language acquisition device) an inbuilt mechanism that automatically allows a child to decode any spoken language it hears around it. Chomsky suggests that all languages share a similar deep structure despite the differences in their surface structure. For instance, "I did the homework" and "The homework was done by me" have the same deep structure but differ in the surface structure. The LAD supplies humans with the transformational grammar, which simply means the process of translating underlying meaning into speech. Children use these rules but will sometimes make errors, such as goed and comed (went and came). These are errors in performance not in competence, Chomsky claims.

Skinner's theory of Operant Learning for explaining language development

Skinner, who was a Behaviorist, argued that language acquisition is like any kind of cognitive behavior – it is learnt by reinforcement and shaping. He also calls this operant conditioning – where the child goes through trial-and-error, in other words, where the child tries and fails to use correct language until it succeeds; with reinforcement and shaping provided by the parents gestures (smiles, attention and approval) which are pleasant to the child. Parents, whom ignore unfamiliar sounds and show increased attention to the reinforced phonemes, extinguish the acquisition of phonemes and morphemes. The morphemes then become refined into words by shaping. Parents' accuracy will lead to total extinguishment of "baby" pronunciation and finally, by selective reinforcement and behavior shaping, words will be shaped into telegraphic two-word sentences, later into sentences until the full language has been acquired. Skinner differentiated between two types of verbal responses that a child makes. One of them, the mand is verbal behavior that is reinforced by the child receiving something it wants. For example, when the child sees a chocolate, it can show its own demand by calling out "choc". As the child used appropriate verbal behavior, he then receives chocolate and reinforcement. The other one is tact, which is verbal behavior caused by imitating others. For instance, when a parent points at an object and says "ball", the child imitates this word and the parent will then approve, which is just another form of reinforcement.

Chomsky's theory of Inborn Grammar for explaining language development

Chomsky, who was a linguist, argues that the ability of language acquisition is innate; therefore taking a biological approach-stand. Children will automatically acquire language by being exposed to it. There is no need for operant conditioning. This ability is supported by, what Chomsky calls a LAD (innate language acquisition device) an inbuilt mechanism that automatically allows a child to decode any spoken language it hears around it. Chomsky suggests that all languages share a similar deep structure despite the differences in their surface structure. For instance, "I did the homework" and "The homework was done by me" have the same deep structure but differ in the surface structure. The LAD supplies humans with the transformational grammar, which simply means the process of translating underlying meaning into speech. Children use these rules but will sometimes make errors, such as goed and comed (went and came). These are errors in performance not in competence, Chomsky claims.