Language Development.

- Milestones, theories, and controversies
Milestones of Language Acquisition

- Non Verbal communication
- The Prelinguistic Period
Prelinguistic communication

- Facilitates language development and social and emotional development
Key developments in language

- Crying
- Cooing
- Babbling
- Single words - Holophrase
- Two-or more word utterances – telegraphic speech
- Receptive versus expressive language development
Early Language

- Language spurt at 18 months to 2 years
- Over extensions:
- Under extensions
- over-regularizations --- “I runned” “I goed”
Children and language learning

- Spacing is learned over time..
- [http://whyfiles.org/058language/baby_talk.html](http://whyfiles.org/058language/baby_talk.html)
- Ambiguities in language- word order varies by culture
I once shot an elephant in my pajamas

- What does it mean?
This?
THIS IS A WUG.

NOW THERE IS ANOTHER ONE.
THERE ARE TWO OF THEM.
THERE ARE TWO ____.
Theories of Language Acquisition

- There are various views to explain how children learn language.
- How much do biological factors influence language development?
- Is language “learned” or does it maturationally unfold, like say walking?
Behavioral Views

- Babble-luck – language is learned much in the way any other skill is learned.
- Shaping, reinforcement, punishment, etec.
Social-Cognitive Theories

- Bandura
- Child directed speech
- Role for imitation, modeling, cognition
- Incorrect grammar is not punished
- Meaning is reinforced.
Biologically Oriented Theories

- Chomsky - LANGUAGE ACQUISITION DEVICE
- Nativism – Lennenberg-
- A critical period for language?
- Evidence - Biological sequence of Milestones is universal
- Areas of the brain seem specific to various language functions (e.g. Wernicke’s and Broca’s area)
The Brain and Language

- Frontal Lobe- Broca’s area – planning/executing language – “expressive”
- Junction of temporal/parietal Wernicke’s area – “receptive”
Theories of Language Acquisition

- Piaget vs. Vygotsky
- Disagree on relationship between thought and language
- Disagree on the function of “egocentric” speech
VYGOTSKY’S VIEW OF LANGUAGE AND THOUGHT

- Thought
- Language

Age (years)

- Cooing, babbling
- First words
Interactionist Perspective

Biologically based capacities and the language environment interact as the child acquires language.

Language milestones occur in concert with cognitive and socio-emotional achievements.