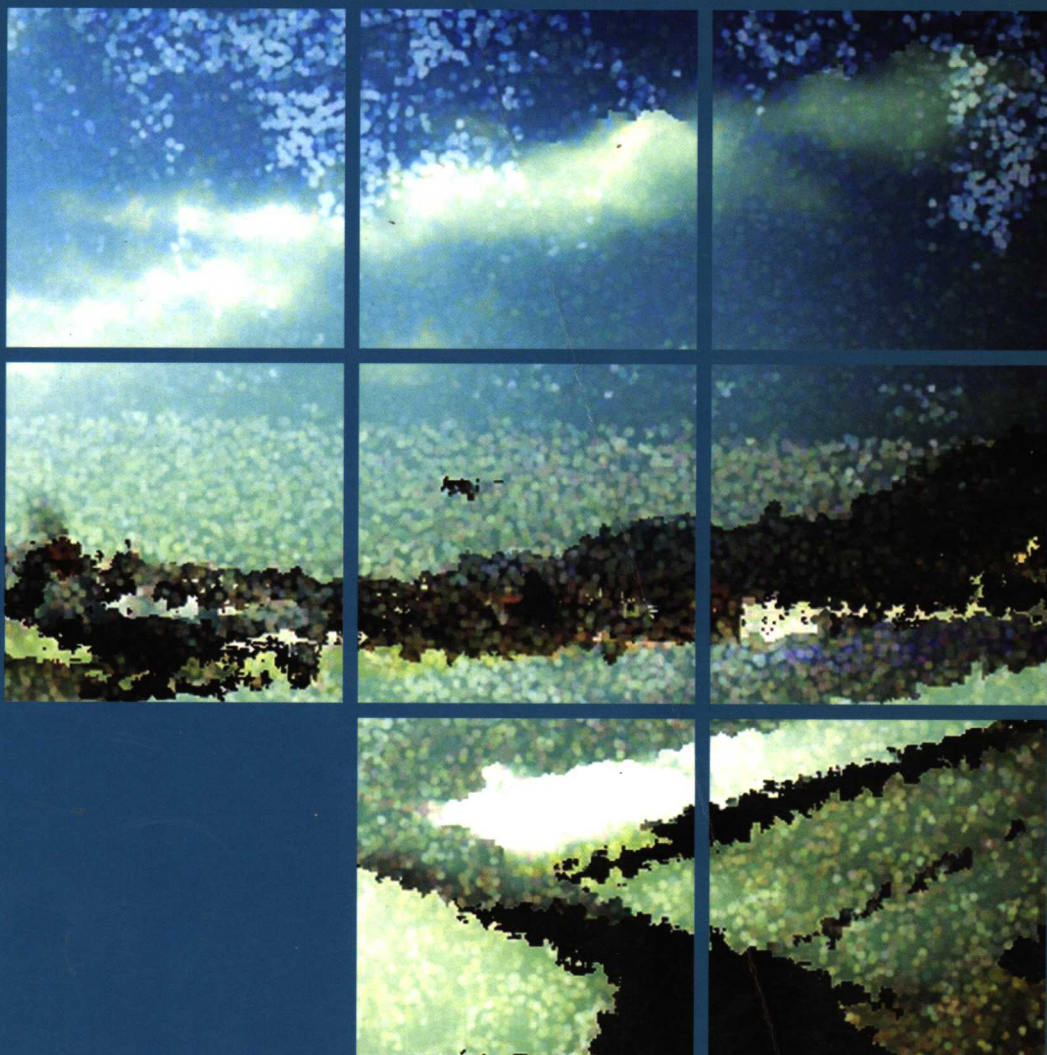




中国心理学会推荐使用教材

The Development of Language 语言的发展 (第6版)

by Jean Berko Gleason



世界图书出版公司



The Development of Language

语言的发展

Language Development



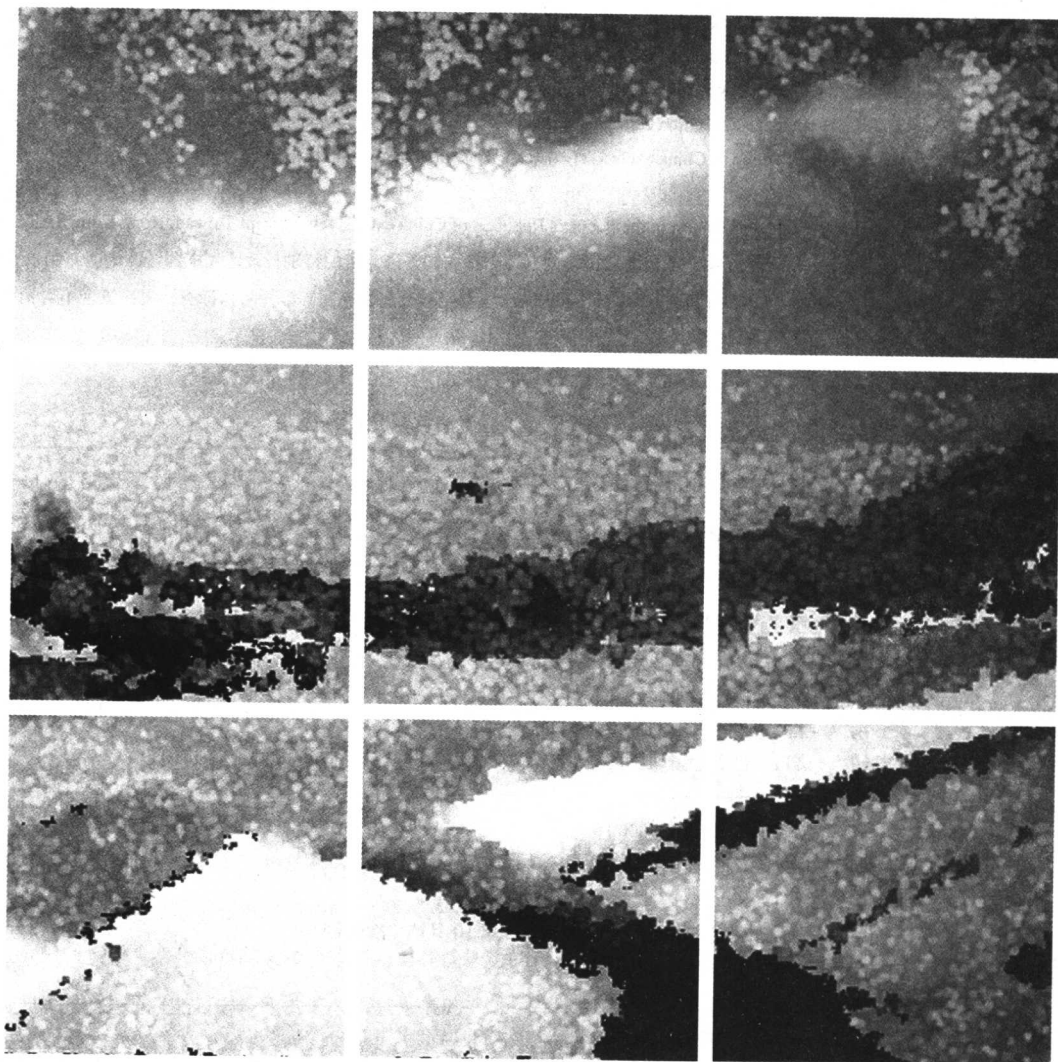
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走进人类语言发展的长河

——《语言的发展》（第六版）评述

“月亮出来了，小孩和小狗一块儿在看青蛙，看呀看。青蛙眼睛就冲上，也看着他们。小孩睡着了，青蛙跳出来了，伸出来了一只腿。小男孩还在睡，嘴巴张着。等他醒之前，他看见青蛙没了，狗也看见青蛙没了，它就说：‘汪！汪汪！’他们俩就找呀找，找呀找……”

上面这段文字是一个5岁的女孩根据连环画《小青蛙，你在哪里？》讲出的一段故事，是我去年在北京一所幼儿园中记录到的。直到现在，我还依然记得这个小姑娘讲话时专注的表情和自信的神态。每每翻出孩子们给我讲的故事，一些问题总会跳入我的脑海之中：儿童为什么能够掌握如此复杂的语法从而说出具有连贯性的语言呢？他们又是如何掌握这些复杂的语法的？儿童自己会发明一种语言吗？语言是人类所特有的能力吗？语言是一种单独的能力还是人类一般认知能力的一个方面？语言的发展存在个体差异吗？如果有，这些差异又是什么？语言的发展会出现异常吗？是不是儿童掌握了复杂的语法后，语言的发展就完成了？随着年龄的增长，人的语言能力还会发生变化吗？——这些问题都是对语言获得和语言发展感兴趣的人士所渴望了解的问题，也是深深吸引研究者在语言发展领域中不断探索的问题。

美国波士顿大学心理系教授、心理语言学家 Jean Berko Gleason 于2005年推出的新书《语言的发展》（第六版）（The Development of Language, Sixth Edition）就是一本我们了解人类语言、语言获得和语言发展的极佳读物。Jean Berko Gleason 教授具有深厚的心理语言学的背景，她因设计“Wug Test”（Berko, 1958）而被誉为采用实验技术探测儿童产生特定语法结构能力的先行者，而且这项研究至今都在语言获得研究领域内具有重要意义。近年来，Berko教授对儿童语言的研究重点在于父母的语言输入对儿童语言发展的影响以及语言社会化的过程，同时关注心理的发展以及语言在其中的作用。Berko教授的这些研究兴趣以及对语言和语言发展的看法充分体现在《语言的发展》（第六版）的框架结构之中，也渗透于各章节的内容之内。

Berko 认为，语言是包括语音、词法、句法、语义和语用等子系统在内的、具有层级结构的认知和心理语言系统。语言发展的内容不仅包括语音、词法、句法、语义的发展，还包括语用的发展，即获得在多样化的社会情境中恰当使用语言的能力，这种能力是超越语言能力的，需要具备使用语言的社会规范方面的知识。因此，在《语言的发展》（第六版）的第六章中，作者向我们系统介绍了研究交流能力的理论取向以及儿童交流能力的发展，呈现了生动丰富的研究结果。这些是我在过去读到的有关语言发展的专著，特别是国内的一些著作中很少能看到的内容。

许多有关语言发展的专著一般比较关注儿童的语言获得,认为语言发展在儿童掌握了最复杂的句法结构之后就完成了。但是 Berko 认为,语言发展正如心理发展一样,是一个毕生发展的过程。认知神经科学的发展已经证明,儿童一旦获得了某种语言,这种语言的发展就不是静态的。语言的发展经历着神经系统的不断重组,对于其它认知功能来说的典型心理过程的重新整合也会在语言领域内发生。即使到了学龄期、青少年期和成年期,人的语言发展也不会停滞。因此,在本书中,作者不但谈及了语言各个子系统的发展,而且还涵盖了从婴儿到成年语言发展的内容。所以说,这是一部立足于从毕生发展角度来通观人类语言发展的著作。

《语言的发展》(第六版)的可圈可点之处不仅在于作者勾勒了整个人类语言发展的过程,还在于作者将当今认知神经科学和遗传学对人类语言研究的成果整合起来讨论。近年来,有关收养儿童语言获得的研究成为国外语言获得研究的一个热点问题。这种研究主要是通过评价儿童亲生父母和收养父母的认知和语言能力,并与儿童当前的语言能力加以比较来确定遗传和环境在儿童语言获得中的作用。这种研究得益于行为遗传学领域研究设计的思路,对于我们今后研究遗传和环境各自在语言获得上的作用、确定遗传和环境对语言获得速度和风格差异的影响大有启发。

纵观语言获得和语言发展的研究历史,不同的研究者对于如何解释语言的发展提出了不同的看法。《语言的发展》(第六版)一书支持语言发展的交互作用(Interactive)的观点,即语言的发展是先天能力和环境交互作用的结果。生物学基础使语言的发展成为可能,环境是促进语言发展的因素。但是,作者并没有局限于这一种语言发展的基本理论取向,还向读者阐释和评价了行为主义取向(Behavioral Approach)和语言学取向(Linguistic Approach)对语言发展的看法,这就为读者思考和理解人类语言发展的基本理论问题提供了非常开放和广阔的视角。

任何一本书都不可能包罗万象。《语言的发展》(第六版)一书虽然没有涉及语言的跨文化研究和双语研究的内容,但却十分注重语言获得和语言教育之间的关系问题。特别是在语言发展的个体差异一章中,作者明确指出,发现语言发展中个体差异的意义不仅仅在于对语言获得理论做出贡献,还在于在语言研究和教育实践中应用这些成果,改进我们干预高危儿童语言发展、阅读教学和外语教学的方法。作者所引用的一些研究成果提示我们,只有将语言获得和发展的理论研究与教育实践密切结合方能显示理论研究的生命力。

《语言的发展》(第六版)各章内容都是由权威专家和对各个研究领域做出重要贡献的专家撰写,各章作者很好地把握了该领域的研究现状和进展,向读者呈现了他们所认为的各领域中具有代表性的观点和最新的研究成果,使这本书具有了很高的学术价值。尽管有人曾引用邱吉尔的话来形容儿童如何获得语言仍然是“某个谜团内一个充满着神秘色彩的谜”,但是,只要一章章翻阅此书,在作者明快而生动的语言的引领下,你会感觉到自己正在一步步走进儿童的语言世界,一步步融入人类语言发展的长河,其中发现的欣喜与困惑、探究的冲动与期待有待于每一位读者细细体味。

李甦

中国科学院心理研究所

Preface

In the fall of 2002 I was invited to give a “24/7” lecture at the Ig Nobel Ceremonies at Harvard. The Igs are a spoof of the real thing, and my lecture on language development had to conform to some unusual rules: It could be only twenty-four seconds long, followed by a complete summary that anyone could understand, in seven words. Here’s the lecture (I did it in 21 seconds) and summary:

Language is a hierarchically structured cognitive and psycholinguistic system encompassing subsystems of phonology, morphology, syntax, semantics, and pragmatics. The Wug test reveals the presence of internalized inflectional morphology in preoperational individuals. Development proceeds in stages from reduplicated open syllables through *hic et nunc* utterances to ultimate adult communicative competence.

Summary

Babies babble,
Children prattle,
Adults create haiku

The lecture is actually what this book is about, and though it may sound like total jargon (the theme of the Ig Nobels in 2002), it will ultimately make perfect sense to our readers. (Details of the ceremony can be found at <http://www.improb.com/ig/2002/2002-details.html>.)

This is the sixth edition of *The Development of Language*, which we have written for anyone with an interest in how children acquire language and in how language develops over the life span. Readers will learn about what the fetus hears prenatally, what happens to language in the aging brain, and everything in between. Our emphasis on change over the life span is even more important now than it was when we first began to write this book, since developments in cognitive neuroscience have made it evident that language, once acquired, is not static but, rather, undergoes constant neural reorganization.

Every chapter has been written by an expert in that topic, but in a way that is accessible to educated nonexperts. We have included key words and a glossary to help make sure important points are clear. The book is intended as a text for upper-level

undergraduate or graduate courses in language development, or as readings for courses in psycholinguistics, cognition, developmental psychology, speech pathology, and related subjects. The book also serves as a resource for professionals in all of the fields just noted.

In addition to all the features that characterized earlier editions, this edition has much new and updated material. In particular:

1. The expanded chapter on atypical language development (Chapter 9) contains new information about the success of cochlear implants that was not previously available. It also reflects current research on the autism spectrum disorders, reviews new therapeutic approaches to individuals whose language development is atypical, and critically evaluates recent claims regarding the etiology of atypicality.
2. Our authors include information on topics that are contemporary: For instance, since 1990, there have been about 33,000 children adopted into the United States from China, and we are now able to report on their acquisition of English. We also discuss new genetic studies that make some claims about the biological bases of language, in particular the gene called FOXP2.
3. We take into account the growing role of computers and the Internet in our intellectual lives. We have expanded information on the use of the Child Language Data Exchange System, which is now Web-based, and we direct readers to many other resources and references on the Web, both in the book and in the instructor's manual.

In order to benefit from the book, readers do not need previous knowledge of linguistics; each chapter presents its material along with whatever linguistic background information is relevant. On the other hand, we assume that readers are familiar with basic concepts in psychology (e.g., *object permanence*) and with the work of major figures such as Jean Piaget and B. F. Skinner. Many books on language development are concerned only with language acquisition by children, and have tended to assume that development is complete when the most complex syntactic structures have been attained. But linguistic development, like psychological development, is a lifelong process, and so we have set out to illuminate the nature of language development over the life span.

It would be hard for a single author to write this book authoritatively. The study of language development has grown so rapidly in recent years that there are now many topics that are highly specialized, and it is rare for one person to be an expert in all areas of this expanding field. For instance, there are few investigators who are authorities on the language of both toddlers and people in their seventies and older. Yet, both topics are covered here. Fortunately, a number of researchers specializing in major subfields have agreed to contribute to the book; the chapters, therefore, are written by authors

who not only know their topic well, but are known for their research in it. They present what they consider to be the salient ideas and the most recent and relevant studies in their own areas.

Since development is always the result of an interaction between innate capacities and environmental forces, we take an interactive perspective, one that takes into account both the biological endowment that makes language possible and the environmental factors that foster development. Our theoretical perspective has remained the same—both interactive and eclectic—but we have tried to add new material that represents the field, even if does not necessarily represent our own views.

There are so many different topics included in the study of language development that it is impossible to put them all in one cohesive book. We have had to be selective in our choice of chapters, and some of our favorite subjects have, of necessity, been omitted. We have not attempted to include cross-cultural and bilingual studies that rely on knowledge of languages other than English.

Instructors who adopt the text will be happy to learn that a new instructor's manual prepared by Pam Gleason is available. The manual provides exam questions and helpful outlines of the chapters. It emphasizes key points and provides suggestions for classroom activities. Students and instructors will want to visit the websites related to language, particularly the Child Language Data Exchange System (CHILDES), which can be found easily by entering its name into any search engine.

It is impossible to edit a book without becoming indebted to many people; I am grateful, first of all, to the authors who agreed very graciously to revise their earlier contributions. Thanks also to Steve Dragin, our editor at Allyn and Bacon, and to Mary Perry at Boston University, who has been, as ever, immensely helpful. I thank the following reviewers for their comments and suggestions: Pamela Gardner, Marshall University; Roy C. Major, Arizona State University; John R. Muma, University of Southern Mississippi; and Janna B. Oetting, Louisiana State University.

I know the other authors join me in remembering Roger Brown, who inspired us all.

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The Development of Language

An Overview and a Preview

Jean Berko Gleason
Boston University

Why do we study language development? This phenomenal yet basically universal human achievement poses some of the most challenging theoretical and practical questions of our times: Do infants, or even fetuses, pay attention to language? What if no one spoke to them—would children invent language by themselves? How and why do young children acquire complex grammar? Are humans unique, or do other animals have language as we define it? What if we raised a chimp as if it were our own child—would it learn to talk? Are there theories that can adequately account for language development? Is language a separate capacity, or is it simply one facet of our general cognitive ability? What is it that individuals actually must know in order to have full adult competence in language, and to what extent is the development of those skills representative of universal processes? What about individual differences? What happens when language develops atypically, and is there anything we can do about it? What happens to language skills as one grows older: What is acquired and what is lost? These are some of the questions that intrigue language-development researchers, and they have led to the plan of this book.

By the time they are three or four years old, children everywhere have acquired the major elements of the language spoken around them, regardless of how complex the grammar and sound system may be. By the time they are of school age and even before they can read, they vary their speech to suit the social and communicative nature of a situation; they know the meaning and pronunciation of literally thousands of words, and they use quite correctly the grammatical forms—subjects, objects, verbs, plurals, and tenses—whose names they learn only in the late elementary years. Language development, however, does not cease when the individual reaches school age,

nor, for that matter, adolescence or maturity; the developmental process continues throughout the life cycle. The reorganization and reintegration of mental processes that are typical of other intellectual functions can also be seen in language, as the changing conditions that accompany maturity lead to modification of linguistic capacity. This book, therefore, is written from a developmental perspective that encompasses the life span. Although most studies of language development have centered on children, the questions we ask require the study of mature individuals as well.

This chapter is divided into four major sections: The first section provides a brief overview of *the course of language development* from early infancy to old age. It serves as a preview of the chapters that follow. The major topics mentioned and the relevant references are the substance of the corresponding later chapters of the book.

The second section notes some of the unique *biological foundations* for language that make its development possible in humans. Our biological endowment is necessary but not sufficient to ensure language development, which does not occur without social interaction. The third section describes the major *linguistic systems* that individuals must acquire. No particular linguistic theory is advocated here; instead, descriptive information is presented that has provided the framework for much basic research in language acquisition, and more technical linguistic material is presented in the appropriate substantive chapter. If there is a unifying perspective that the authors of this book share, it is the view that individuals acquire during their lives an **internalized representation** of language that is systematic in nature and amenable to study. This does not imply that inner representation could be established in the absence of social contact, nor without several different types of learning (as Chapter 7, "Theoretical Approaches to Language Acquisition," makes clear).

The fourth and final section of this chapter focuses on the background and methods of the *study of language development*.

An Overview of the Course of Language Development

Communication Development in Infancy

We now know that even before babies are born they are listening to the language spoken around them: Research shows that newborns prefer to hear the language they heard while *in utero*. During their first months, infants begin to acquire the communicative skills that underlie language, long before they say their first words. Babies are intensely social beings: They gaze into the eyes of their caregivers and are sensitive to the emotional tone of the voices around them. They pay attention to the language spoken to them; they take their turn in conversation, even if that turn is only a burble. If they want something, they learn to make their intentions known. In addition to possessing the social motivations that are evidenced so early in life, infants are also physiologically

equipped to process incoming speech signals; they are even capable of making fine distinctions among speech sounds. By the age of six months, babies have already begun to categorize the sounds of their own language, much as adult speakers do. By the age of about eleven months, many babies understand fifty or more common words, and point happily at the right person when someone asks, "Where's daddy?"

At approximately the same age that they take their first steps, many infants produce their first words. Like walking, early language appears at around the same age and in much the same way all over the world, regardless of the degree of sophistication of the society or the characteristics of the language that is acquired. Before children produce those first words, they are able to communicate nonverbally with those around them, and to convey their intentions. The precursors of language that develop during the first year of life are discussed in Chapter 2.

Phonological Development: Learning Sounds and Sound Patterns

Midway through their first year, infants begin to babble, playing with sound much as they play with their fingers and toes. Early in their second year, for most children, the babbling of the prelinguistic infant gives way to words. There has been considerable controversy over the relation between babbling and talking, but most researchers now agree that babbling blends into early speech and may continue even after the appearance of recognizable words. Once infants have begun to speak, the course of language development appears to have some universal characteristics. Typically, toddlers' early utterances are only one word long, and the words are simple in pronunciation and concrete in meaning. Here, as in other areas of linguistic research, it is important to recognize that different constraints act upon the child's **comprehension** and **production** of a particular form. Some sounds are more difficult to pronounce than others, and combinations of consonants may prove particularly problematic. Within a given language, children solve the phonological problems they encounter in varying ways. A framework for the study of children's growing ability to both recognize and produce the sounds of their language is provided in Chapter 3.

Semantic Development: Learning the Meanings of Words

The ways in which speakers relate words to their referents and their meanings are the subject matter of **semantic development**. Just as there are constraints on the phonological shapes of children's early words, there appear to be limits on the kinds of meanings that those early words embody: for instance, very young children's vocabularies are more likely to contain words that refer to objects that move (*bus*) than objects that are immobile (*bench*). Their vocabularies reflect their daily lives and are unlikely to refer to events that are distant in time or space or to anything of an abstract nature. Early words like *hi*, *doggie*, *mommy*, and *juice* refer to the objects, events, and people in the