

Psych56L/ Ling51

Fall 2008

Review Questions: Phonological Development

(1) Terms/concepts to know: IPA, contrastive sounds, sound features, diphthong, cooing, marginal babbling, canonical babbling, variegated babbling, nonreduplicated babbling, prosody, High Amplitude Sucking, categorical perception, across-category perception, within-category perception, motherese, phonological idiom, phonological processes, weak syllable deletion, final consonant deletion, reduplication, consonant harmony, consonant cluster reduction, velar fronting, stopping, gliding, behaviorist theory, positive reinforcement, Native Language Magnet Theory, neural networks

(2) What's the reason for having the International Phonetic Alphabet? That is, explain why it's not more sensible to just use the spelling systems already existing for the languages of the world.

(3) Explain how the vocal play stage of infant development may actually be driven by the infant's physical growth.

(4) Why is the ability to hear their own vocal output important for infants' phonological development? (Hint: Think about what happens in the case of deaf infants.)

(5) What is an example of categorical perception? Explain what it means to have categorical perception, and why the example you describe is an example of it.

(6) What evidence is there that motherese helps infants acquire the phonological system of their language? (Hint: Think about the properties of motherese that might be useful.) Is motherese necessary for successful language acquisition?

(7) Why is learning words harder than simply learning to recognize the sounds that make up the words?

(8) Suppose that a given sound, such as /θ/, is a rare sound crosslinguistically. Should we expect this sound to appear earlier in or later in infants' development?

(9) How does the Native Language Magnet Theory relate to a neural network approach to processing sounds?