

Language: How Babies Acquire Theirs

Pay attention to how the speaker puts stress on some words and syllables. In the first five sentences, **black bold font** = stressed syllables and words, and the **red font** = the unstressed schwa vowel sound (ə). Not all the unstressed vowels are the schwa sound, but many of them are (ə). With the other sentences (6-46), the stressed and unstressed elements are not indicated, by try to imitate the way the speaker spoke.

1. What I'd like to **talk about today** is the **topic of child language development**.
2. Now, I **know** that **you** all **are trying to develop a second language**, but for the **moment**, let's **think about a related topic**.
3. And **that** is **how children develop** their **first language**.
4. What do we **know about** how **babies develop** their **language and communication ability**?
5. Well, we **know** **babies** are able to **communicate as soon as they are born, even before** they learn to **speak their first language**.
6. At first, they communicate by crying.
7. This crying lets their parents know when they are hungry, or unhappy, or uncomfortable.
8. However, they soon begin the process of acquiring their language.
9. The first stage of language acquisition begins just a few weeks after birth.
10. At this stage babies start to make cooing noises when they are happy, then around four months of age they begin to babble.
11. Babies all over the world begin to babble around the same age, and they all begin to make the same kinds of babbling noises.
12. Now by the time they are ten months old, however, the babbling of babies from different language backgrounds sounds different.
13. For example, the babbling of a baby in a Chinese-speaking home sounds different from the babbling of a baby in an English-speaking home.
14. Babies begin a new stage of language development when they begin to speak their first words.
15. At first, they invent their own words for things.
16. For example, a baby in an English-speaking home may say *baba* for the word bottle, or *kiki* for cat.
17. In the next few months, babies will acquire a lot of words.
18. These words are usually the names of things that are in the babies' environment, words for food or toys, for example.
19. They will begin to use these words to communicate with others.
20. For example, if a baby holds up an empty juice bottle and says "juice" to his father, the baby seems to be saying, "I want more juice, daddy" or "May I have more juice, daddy?"
21. This word *juice* is really a one-word sentence.
22. Now the next stage of language acquisition begins around the age of 18 months when babies begin to say two-word sentences.
23. They begin to use a kind of grammar to put these words together.

24. The speech they produce is called “telegraphic” speech because the babies omit all but the most essential words.
25. An English-speaking child might say something like “Daddy, up” which actually could mean “Daddy, pick me up, please.”
26. Then between two and three years of age young children begin to learn more and more grammar.
27. For example, they begin to use the past tense of verbs.
28. In other words, they begin to learn the rule for making the past tense of many verbs.
29. The children begin to say things such as “I walked home” and “I kissed mommy.”
30. They also begin to over-generalize this new grammar rule and make a lot of grammar mistakes.
31. For example, children often say such things as “I goed to bed” instead of “I went to bed” or “I eated ice cream” instead of “I ate ice cream.”
32. In other words, the children have learned the past tense rule for regular verbs such as walk and kiss, but they haven’t learned that they cannot use this rule for all verbs.
33. Some verbs like *eat* are irregular and the past tense forms for irregular verbs must be learned individually.
34. Anyway, these mistakes are normal, and the children will soon learn to use the past tense for regular and irregular verbs correctly.
35. The children then continue to learn other grammatical structures in the same way.
36. Now if we stop to think about it, actually it is quite amazing how quickly babies and children all over the world learn their language and how similar the process is for babies all over the world.
37. Do you remember anything about how you learned your first language during the early years of your life?
38. Think about the process for a minute.
39. What was your very first word?
40. Was it “mama,” or maybe “papa”?
41. Now think also about the process of learning English as a second language.
42. Can you remember the first word you learned in English?
43. I doubt that it was “mama.”
44. Now think about some of the similarities and differences involved in the processes of child and adult language learning.
45. We’ll talk about some similarities and differences in the first and second language learning processes tomorrow.
46. See you then.

correct transcript

Dynamic Listening Comprehension Unit 2 Chapter 2 (Video #4)

Language: How Babies Acquire Theirs Error Correction

Types of errors: articles (*a, an, the*), verb tense, verb forms, passive voice, singular/plural, parts of speech (for example, using a noun when an adjective is necessary—*safety* or *safe*?)

These types of errors are the ones that students make most commonly in their writing and speaking.

Try to find all the errors by reading, then listen to the lecture again and try to hear the differences between what the speaker says and what is written in this text that needs to be corrected. There is one error on each line.

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3. And that is how children develops their first language.
4. What do we know about how baby develop their language and communication ability?
5. Well, we know babies are able to communicate as soon as they born, even before they learn to speak their first language.
6. At first, they communicating by crying.
7. This crying lets their parents know when they are hunger, or unhappy, or uncomfortable.
8. However, they soon began the process of acquiring their language.
9. The first stage of language acquisition begins just few weeks after birth.
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23. They beginning to use a kind of grammar to put these words together.

24. The speech they produce is called “telegraphic” speech because the babies omit all but most essential words.
25. An English-speaking child might say something like “Daddy, up” which actually could mean “Daddy, pick me up, please.”
26. Then between two and three years of age young children begin to learn more and more grammar.
27. For example, they begin to use past tense of verbs.
28. In other words, they begin to learn the rule for making the past tense of many verbs.
29. The children begin to say things such as “I walked home” and “I kissed mommy.”
30. They also begin to over-generalize this new grammar rule and make a lot of grammar mistakes.
31. For example, children often say things such as “I goed to bed” instead of “I went to bed” or “I eated ice cream” instead of “I ate ice cream.”
32. In other words, the children have learned the past tense rule for regular verbs such as walk and kiss, but they haven’t learned that they cannot use this rule for all verbs.
33. Some verbs like *eat* are irregular and the past tense forms for irregular verbs must be learned individually.
34. Anyway, these mistakes are normal, and the children will soon learn to use the past tense for regular and irregular verbs correctly.
35. The children then continue to learn other grammatical structures in the same way.
36. Now if we stop to think about it, actually it is quite amazing how quickly babies and children all over the world learn their language and how similar the process is for babies all over the world.
37. Do you remember anything about how you learned your first language during early years of your life?
38. Think about the process for a minute.
39. What was your very first word?
40. Was “mama,” or maybe “papa”?
41. Now think also about the process of learning English as a second language.
42. Can you remember the first word you learned in English?
43. I doubt that it was “mama.”
44. Now think about some of the similarities and differences involved in the processes of child and adult language learning.
45. We talk about some similarities and differences in the first and second language learning processes tomorrow.
46. See you then.

(transcript with errors to be corrected)

Language: How Babies Acquire Theirs Error Correction ANSWERS

1. What I'd like to talk about today is **the** topic of child language development.
2. Now, I know that you all are **trying** to develop a second language, but for the moment, let's think about a related topic.
3. And that is how children develop_ their first language.
4. What do we know about how babies develop their language and communication ability?
5. Well, we know babies are able to communicate as soon as they **are** born, even before they learn to speak their first language.
6. At first, they **communicate** by crying.
7. This crying lets their parents know when they are **hungry**, or unhappy, or uncomfortable.
8. However, they soon **begin** the process of acquiring their language.
9. The first stage of language acquisition begins just **a** few weeks after birth.
10. At this stage babies start to make cooing noises when they **are** happy, then around four months of age they begin to babble.
11. Babies all over the world begin to babble around **the** same age, and they all begin to make the same kinds of babbling noises.
12. Now by the time they are ten months old, however, the babbling of babies from different language backgrounds sounds **s** different.
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14. Babies begin a new stage of language development when they begin **to** speak their first words.
15. At first, they **invent** their own words for things.
16. For example, a baby in an English-speaking home may **say** *baba* for the word bottle, or *kiki* for cat.
17. In **the** next few months, babies will acquire a lot of words.
18. These words **s** are usually the names of things that are in the babies' environment, words for food or toys, for example.
19. They will begin to use these words to communicate with others **s**.
20. For example, if a baby holds **s** up an empty juice bottle and says "juice" to his father, the baby seems to be saying, "I want more juice, daddy" or "May I have more juice, daddy?"
21. This word *juice* is really **a** one-word sentence.
22. Now the next stage of language acquisition begins around the age of 18 months when **babies** begin to say two-word sentences.
23. They **begin** to use a kind of grammar to put these words together.

24. The speech they produce is called “telegraphic” speech because the babies omit all but **the** most essential words.
25. An English-speaking child might say something like “Daddy, up” which actually could **mean** “Daddy, pick me up, please.”
26. Then between two and three **years** of age young children begin to learn more and more grammar.
27. For example, they begin to use **the** past tense of verbs.
28. In other words, they begin to learn the rule for making the past tense of many **verbs**.
29. The children begin to say such **things** as “I walked home” and “I kissed mommy.”
30. They also begin to over-generalize this new grammar rule and make a lot of grammar **mistakes**.
31. For example, children often say **_** such things as “I goed to bed” instead of “I went to bed” or “I eated ice cream” instead of “I ate ice cream.”
32. In other words, the children have **learned** the past tense rule for regular verbs such as walk and kiss, but they haven’t learned that they cannot use this rule for all verbs.
33. Some verbs like *eat* are irregular and the past tense forms for irregular verbs must be **learned** individually.
34. Anyway, these mistakes are normal, and the children will soon learn to use the past tense for regular and irregular verbs **correctly**.
35. The children then continue to learn other grammatical **structures** in the same way.
36. Now if we stop to think about it, actually it is quite amazing how quickly babies and children all over **the** world learn their language and how similar the process is for babies all over the world.
37. Do you remember anything about how you learned your first language during **the** early years of your life?
38. Think about the process for **a** minute.
39. What **was** your very first word?
40. Was **it** “mama,” or maybe “papa”?
41. Now think also about the process of learning English as **a** second language.
42. Can you remember the first word you **learned** in English?
43. I doubt that it **was** “mama.”
44. Now think about some of the **similarities** and differences involved in the processes of child and adult language learning.
45. We’**ll** talk about some similarities and differences in the first and second language learning processes tomorrow.
46. See you then.

Dictation

(five words in each space)

What I'd like to talk about today is the

(1) _____.

Now, I know that you all are

(2) _____ language, but for the moment, let's think about a related topic.

And that is

(3) _____ language.

What (4) _____ babies develop their language and communication ability?

Well, we know babies are able to communicate

(5) _____ born, even before they learn to speak their first language.

At first, they communicate by crying.

This crying (6) _____ they are hungry, or unhappy, or uncomfortable.

However, they soon begin (7) _____ language.

The first stage of language acquisition begins

(8) _____ birth.

At this stage babies start to make cooing noises when they are happy, then

(9) _____ they begin to babble.

Dictation

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(1) _____.

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At this stage babies start to make cooing noises when they are happy, then

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What I'd like to talk about today is the **topic of child language development**.

Now, I know that you all are **trying to develop a second** language, but for the moment, let's think about a related topic.

And that is **how children develop their first** language.

What **do we know about how** babies develop their language and communication ability?

Well, we know babies are able to communicate **as soon as they are** born, even before they learn to speak their first language.

At first, they communicate by crying.

This crying **lets their parents know when** they are hungry, or unhappy, or uncomfortable.

However, they soon begin **the process of acquiring their** language.

The first stage of language acquisition begins **just a few weeks after** birth.

At this stage babies start to make cooing noises when they are happy, then **around four months of age** they begin to babble.

Summary

This lecture explains how language development occurs from age 0 to age 3. It is the same process for all humans, regardless of their culture or language. At first, babies communicate by crying. This is how they tell their parents that they are hungry or cold, for example. After a few weeks, they begin to make cooing noises, and by the age of four months they make babbling noises. This babbling is the same regardless of the mother language, but by age ten months the babbling sounds the same as the mother language. Between 10 months and 18 months of age babies begin to speak in one-word sentences. They invent new words, and learn the names of things around them, such as toys and food. At age 18 months they begin to use two-word sentences with a sort of grammar which is called telegraphic speech. Between the ages of 2 and 3 years old babies acquire a lot of grammar. They begin to over-generalize, which means they apply rules when they should not. They say, for example, *goes* instead of *went*, or *eated* instead of *ate*. It is amazing that babies can learn their language so quickly, and that the learning happens the same way in all humans.

DLC 4 How Babies Acquire Language

	transitional language	age	stage	description
1	first...			
2	then...			
3	now by the time...			
4	at first			
5	in the next few months			
6	now			
7	then			
8	then			

DLC 4 How Babies Acquire Language

	transitional language	age	stage	description
1	first...	0 - a few weeks	cooing noises	expresses happiness, feelings, hunger
2	then...	4 months	babbling	same regardless of language of environment
3	now by the time...	10 months	babbling sounds different	babbling sounds are different in different language environments
4	at first	after 10 months	invent new words	e.g. <i>baba, kiki</i>
5	in the next few months	after age 10 months	one-word sentences	begin to acquire a lot of words
6	now	18 months	two-word sentences	begin to use grammar, telegraphic speech
7	then	2-3 years old	learn regular grammar rules	learn grammar, but they over-generalize grammar rules (<i>walk, walked, eat, eated</i>)
8	then	2-3 years old and later	learn irregular verbs, more grammar	learn to not over-generalize, learning continues