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JEAN BERKO GLEASON (ed.), *The development of language*, 6th edn. Boston, MA: Pearson, 2005. Pp. 516. ISBN 0205394140.

ROBERT E. OWENS, *Language development: An introduction*, 7th edn. Boston, MA: Pearson, 2008. Pp. 509. ISBN 0023901810.

WILLIAM O'GRADY, *How children learn language*. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2005. Pp. 248. ISBN 0521531926 (paperback).

The current review considers three recently published (i.e. within the last five years) language acquisition textbooks. The aim of the review is to inform the readership of the journal about a selection of alternatives that are available on the market and identify each book's pedagogical strength. Three books are reviewed: Berko Gleason (2005), Owens (2008) and O'Grady (2005).

Berko Gleason's (2005) *The Development of Language* (6th edition) is a comprehensive textbook covering the key areas of research in the field. The main focus of the text is the development of language in young children; however, the book also includes research on issues pertaining to language and ageing. Thus the book presents a global, theory-neutral approach to the area of language development, and in doing so provides an excellent introduction to the field. The textbook would provide a good introduction to language development on a range of undergraduate programmes, for example, psychology, linguistics and education studies.

The book is compiled by Jean Berko Gleason and contains chapters written by prominent language development researchers. A potential danger with this approach is that the reader is presented with a series of unrelated chapters that deal with the various aspect of language development (e.g. phonology, syntax, communicative competence) in isolation. However, this is not the case. The authors explicitly refer to information from other chapters where appropriate. This results in a cohesive text in which the reader is presented with links between the various facets of language development. Each chapter contains suggested readings and projects which further add to the value of the textbook as a teaching resource.

In Chapter 1, Berko Gleason presents an informative and accessible introduction to the study of language development, including not only the core issues typically included in this type of textbook, but also a discussion of related areas of research (e.g. language and the brain and animal communication systems). Berko Gleason then summarizes the types of research methods used in the study of language development, specifically CHILDES (the Child Language Data Exchange System), highlighting the empirical nature of language development research.

Chapter 2 is written by Jacqueline Sachs and presents an excellent overview of the preverbal stages in typically developing children. The chapter highlights the importance of the first twelve months of a child's life with regard to language development and situates the *raison d'être* of language as a means of expressing communicative intent.

Chapters 3 to 5 deal with the formal aspects of language development (i.e. phonology, semantics and syntax). Each chapter opens with a concise summary of the background knowledge required for the subject matter, thus making the chapter accessible for a range of readers. Presenting a sufficiently detailed yet accessible introduction to these chapters is no mean feat and obviously not all aspects can be covered. However, in Chapter 5 ('Putting words together') an argument could be made for providing a non-Universal Grammar (UG) alternative to the representation of syntactic knowledge. As the author rightly points out, UG, and specifically Government and Binding (GB) theory, has had a profound impact on research into grammatical development. However, a number of language development researchers have shifted away from UG in support of more psychologically based approaches to linguistic knowledge, namely those found within the Cognitive Linguistic tradition (e.g. Langacker, 1987, 1991; Goldberg, 1995; Croft, 2001). So maybe now is the time to reflect this approach in language development textbooks. A brief overview would not only present the reader with an alternative to UG but also help the reader to situate a number of studies mentioned throughout the book which are based in or sympathetic to the Cognitive Linguistic/Usage-based approach (e.g. Tomasello, 2002; Lieven, Behrens, Spears & Tomasello, 2003; Rowland & Pine, 2000).

Chapter 6 brings the topic of language development back to its communicative roots. Judith Becker Bryant presents a range of issue relating to the development of communicative competence in young children. In the chapter, the author discusses features of communicative competence and factors which affect its development. One potentially interesting addition would be the work of Ninio, Snow and colleagues (e.g. Ninio, 1995; Ninio, Snow, Pan & Rollins, 1994; Snow, Pan, Imbens-Bailey & Herman, 1996), in particular their development of the Inventory of Communicative Acts (INCA-A), which is incorporated in CHILDES. The inclusion of this area of study would contribute to the discussion by providing information not only on the kinds of communicative intents that are found in children's speech, but also how these intents are expressed over time.

Chapter 7 presents a discussion of the theoretical approaches to language development. John N. Bohannon and John D. Bonvillian provide a well-structured evaluation of the Behavioural, Linguistic (i.e. Chomskyan) and Interactionist approaches to language development. The chapter presents an objective description of each approach followed by sections presenting

supporting and contrary evidence. Although the chapter does present a range of theoretical perspectives, it would be useful to include a section on the Usage-based approach to language development. As mentioned earlier, the textbook contains a number of references to studies situated within this approach, yet the framework itself is never mentioned explicitly within the textbook.

Chapters 8 to 11 broaden the scope of language development by investigating individual differences, atypical development, literacy and development of language in adults. These chapters are invaluable to a textbook on language development and single the book out amongst a number of other textbooks aimed at a similar market.

To conclude, *The Development of Language* (6th edition) would make an excellent core text for an introductory course on language development. On a minor note, however, a number of small changes relating to US-specific terminology may be necessary in order to appeal to an international market. For example, the term 'mental retardation' is no longer acceptable to many people. The author does point out that the term is controversial, but it is possible that the term causes more offence outside the US than within. There is also the ubiquitous use of terminology from the North American school system (e.g. 'first graders'). Again, to undergraduate students outside the US this form of terminology may prove problematic.

Like the Berko Gleason (2005) volume, Owens (2008) attempts to provide a comprehensive overview of the field that is directed at undergraduate students. The book is made up of fourteen chapters plus a helpful glossary of terms and two appendices – one on American English speech sounds and the other containing a basic developmental schedule from birth to twelve years. Chapter 1 provides working definitions of language and communication, its components (phonology, morphology, syntax, semantics, pragmatics) and basic properties (e.g. hierarchical structure). Chapter 2 provides some historical and theoretical background for the study of language development. It covers Behaviorism, Chomsky's response to Skinner, Early Chomskyan theory, the Language Acquisition Device, Fillmore's Case Grammar, early 'Semantic' approaches to child language (e.g. Lois Bloom, Roger Brown), 'Sociolinguistic' approaches (Bruner) and 'Emergentism' (e.g. Elman, Bates, MacWhinney). This chapter felt a little outdated and might be quite hard going for undergraduate psychology students who have not yet covered the later chapters. Chapter 3 introduces the students to the basics of cognitive neuroscience and language processing in the developing brain. Psychology students are likely to have covered much of the content on other courses. Thus the use of Chapters 2 and 3 would depend on the course audience.

Chapter 4 charts the course of early perceptual and cognitive development, introducing Piagetian terminology. It covers early perception

of (non-)native speech sounds and the development of babbling. Chapter 5 introduces social cognitive development and its relation to communicative development. It covers infant expression of emotion, toddlers' communicative gestures, child-directed speech and early routines. Early learning processes and strategies are briefly discussed in Chapter 6. Chapter 7 then introduces language development at the toddler stage, covering phonological processes, the use of prosodic patterns to perform speech acts, single-word utterances and first word combinations. Chapters 7 and 8 move on to preschool, and consider early semantics (e.g. relational terms), pragmatics (e.g. conversational skills, narratives, pronouns, deixis), morphology, syntax, and phonemic and phonological development. Chapter 9 defines MLU, Brown's fourteen morphemes, grammatical structures (noun phrase, verb phrase) and constructions (questions, negations, conjunctions, complex sentences).

Moving on to the school years, Chapter 10 focuses on the development of narrative, conversational skills, mature vocabulary, figurative language, metalinguistic ability and further development in language form (e.g. irregular verbs, passives, morphophonology). Chapter 11 deals with literacy, with some reference to the different theoretical approaches to reading and discussion of how executive function relates to reading and spelling. Adolescent and adult language is covered in Chapter 12, which touches on topics such as gender differences and conversational style.

The final two chapters, 13 and 14, discuss bilingualism and research methods. The bilingualism chapter introduces the necessary terminology and includes discussion of bidialectism, focusing on the dialects of the US, especially African-American and Latino English. The last chapter briefly presents language research and analysis, covering naturalistic and experimental data collection and cross-linguistic research. As can be seen, this textbook is impressive for its breadth of coverage. Development is considered from infancy to adulthood and language is presented from all angles. An instructor's manual and test book is also available.

This textbook would make a good introductory text for first year undergraduate students in psychology, linguistics, related disciplines and applied courses such as speech therapy. It covers the breadth of language development without assuming much prior knowledge and provides discussion points at the end of each chapter. From the first chapter onwards, there are helpful diagrams and definitions for students who are new to linguistic terminology. Similarly, no prior knowledge of psychology is assumed and relevant concepts are generally well explained when necessary. The only downside is that, despite being a recent edition, some sections feel outdated. Therefore a course organizer might want use this textbook as a starting point, selecting relevant sections and complementing them with more recent expositions of research findings and current theoretical approaches. We

would recommend this book as a helpful reference book for the first year of an undergraduate course and for any students struggling with more advanced courses.

Unlike the Berko Gleason (2005) and Owens (2008) volumes, O'Grady's (2005) latest textbook has a slightly different aim. The book is published by Cambridge University Press in the *Series Approaches to Linguistics*, the main aim of which is to introduce readers to state-of-the-art linguistic research in a non-technical way, and, by doing so, to provide them with the necessary background knowledge to read some of the primary literature in academic books and journals. O'Grady's book fully meets these objectives in this enjoyable and highly accessible introduction.

The book includes seven chapters covering the main aspects of speech perception and production, and lexical, morphological and syntactic acquisition. Two appendices are also included. One provides some practical guidelines to collecting child language data using a diary or making audio-recordings that will be of interest to students as well as to parents with a keen interest in their children's language development. The other is a guide to the sounds of English and to IPA symbols, useful for those readers who might want to delve further into phonological acquisition. In the spirit of accessibility to the lay reader, IPA symbols are, however, never used in the text; orthographic transcriptions are used instead, and reference is made to adult American English pronunciation where necessary.

Since the seven chapters all address different aspects of language development, they are intended to be read either one after the other, as part of a sequential narrative, or as self-contained pieces. For the sake of linearity it might have been preferable to have Chapter 6 ('Talking the talk') on speech perception and production before Chapters 2 ('The great word hunt') and 3 ('What's the meaning of this?') on the acquisition of morphology and word meaning.

In the short initial chapter ('Small talk'), O'Grady starts by asking some of the questions that preoccupy linguists, philosophers and psychologists, as well as lay people trying to understand how learning one's first language is at all possible. What are the prerequisites to language acquisition? How do children segment words in the speech stream? How do they map meaning onto words once they have extracted them from the input? And how do they learn to put words together in grammatical ways beyond what they hear from their caregivers? In a nutshell: How do children learn language? In the subsequent six chapters O'Grady proceeds to answer most of these questions to the best of the current scholarly understanding. He does so by showing how the findings of experimental studies and naturalistic observations account for some of the amazing linguistic abilities of babies and children. O'Grady's approach is always to start from concrete linguistic examples to illustrate how the ingenuity of well-designed experiments and

the detailed analysis of spontaneous speech can reveal something about the mechanisms behind the developmental linguistic process. It is particularly commendable that he manages to explain technical issues without resorting too often to specialized terminology, while at the same time maintaining a rigorous scientific approach.

Chapter 2 deals with finding and inflecting words. Issues of productivity and creativity with inflectional and derivational morphology are explored in some detail. Chapter 3 provides an in-depth look at the acquisition of word meaning, including nouns, verbs, adjectives and prepositions. It is refreshing to see that, for once, learning word meaning is not equated to learning the meaning of nouns. In Chapter 4 ('Words all in a row') it is the turn of syntax; from the realization of argument structure, to more complex negative, interrogative and relative constructions. Chapter 5 ('What sentences mean') revisits some of the issues first encountered in Chapter 4 by looking at children's understanding of word order and thematic role assignment in active vs. passive sentences. Pronouns are also looked at again in Chapter 5 to explore children's understanding of reflexives, and an overview of some studies on the comprehension of quantifiers is also provided. Chapter 6 deals with speech perception and speech production, taking the reader from babbling to phonological processes along a journey that would have been better suited to the beginning of the book rather than the end.

In the seventh and final chapter ('How do they do it?'), O'Grady goes back to the fundamental questions introduced at the beginning of the book. He focuses on the initial linguistic and/or cognitive endowment that is required to make language acquisition possible. He presents a fair account of the two alternative views of language acquisition that dominate the field. The idea of a domain-specific language acquisition device on one side, and the notion of domain-general mechanisms underlying the process of linguistic development. O'Grady presents the evidence, the arguments for and against, but ultimately leaves the reader to decide.

The engaging style of the book, and its accessibility combined with its scientific rigour make this volume ideal for a lay audience and for introductory undergraduate courses to language acquisition. Considering the 2005 publication date of the book, the only shortcoming is the paucity of bibliographic references after 2000 and the consequent lack of much recent interesting research.

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