

# INTRODUCTION TO PSYCHOLINGUISTICS

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# INTRODUCTION

- \* **Psycholinguistics** is the study of the language processing mechanisms. Psycholinguistics deals with the mental processes a person uses in producing and understanding language.

It is concerned with the relationship between language and the human mind, for example, how word, sentence, and discourse meaning are represented and computed in the mind.

# TOPICS TO BE COVERED INCLUDE

- ◉ General issues of psycholinguistics:
- ◉ **language acquisition** (how human beings learn language)
- ◉ **language production** (how we create and express meaning through language)
- ◉ **language comprehension** (how we perceive and understand speech and written language)
- ◉ **The relationship between language and thought**

- Language acquisition refers to the learning and development of a person's language. The learning of a native or first language is called *first language acquisition*, and the learning of a second or foreign language is called *second language acquisition*.



## Two basic notions in first language acquisition

- ◉ Overgeneralization/Overextension(the extension of a rule beyond its proper limits)
- ◉ Undergeneralization/Underextension(a child uses a word in a more limited way than adults do )

## Examples of overgeneralization

**Overgeneralization** is a frequent phenomenon in language development. It **can be found** not only **in syntactic usage** but also **in word meanings**.

moons: all round objects

cars: all vehicles

dogs: all four-legged animals





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## Undergeneralization

- ◉ Children also **undergeneralize**. When a child uses a word in a more limited way than adults do (e.g. refusing to call a taxi a car), this phenomenon is called *undergeneralization* or *underextension*.
- ◉ Shoes only refers to his mother's shoes.
- ◉ Hat only refers to his own hat.



## Reasons for overgeneralization and undergeneralization

- ◎ **On some occasions**, children's conceptual categories may actually differ from those adults.
- ◎ **On other occasions**, they may know perfectly well that a cow is not a dog but not know what it is called.
- ◎ **On still other occasions**, the child's misuse of words may reflect an attempt at humor.

# STAGES OF FIRST LANGUAGE ACQUISITION

## The Prelinguistic stage

- Heard numbering vowel and consonant
- babbling

## The one word stage

- Holoprastic function
- 1-2 years old

## The two word stage

- Having syntactic and semantic

# The multiword stage

- between 2-3 years old
- e.g Cathy build house

# SECOND LANGUAGE LEARNING

Are children are better than adults when attempting to learn a second language?

# FACTORS INVOLVED IN SECOND LANGUAGE ACQUISITION

Psychological

Social situation

Other psychological variables

# PSYCHOLOGICAL FACTORS AFFECTING SECOND LANGUAGE LEARNING

induction

- Learning rules by self discovery
- e.g. John danced and then he sang

explication

- Young learner would have great difficulty in understanding abstract and complex explanation in second language

memory

- This ability in which very young learner s are HIGH



# PSYCHOLOGICAL AND SOCIAL FACTORS AFFECTING SECOND LANGUAGE LEARNING FOR CHILDREN AND ADULTS

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# SOCIAL SITUATION AFFECTING SECOND LANGUAGE LEARNING

## ○ A. The natural situation

a natural situation for second language learning is one where the second language is experienced in a situation that similar to that which the native language is learned

e.g. 5 years old girl from New York goes to Tokyo with her parents

# THE NATURAL SITUATION

1. Characteristic of the natural situation
2. Decline of beneficial social interaction with age
3. With age, language is more essential for social interaction
4. Older children can have problems

# THE CLASSROOM SITUATION

1. The classroom is isolated from other social life
2. Everything is planned, little is spontaneous
3. Learning language as part of group and not as individual