From WORDS to MORPHOLOGY: Questions and CRITICAL ISSUES

1. Mindful linguistic response to perceiving language > brain maturation and shaping by the language perceived

2. The infant’s advantage: learning and brain-adapting

3. The infant’s strategies of learning adjust accordingly

Taking statistics

Storing what’s statistically stable – sounds, sound bundles, first words

Searching for, finding and storing patterns = Connectionist model

Joining in attention: **Joint attention** is a powerful guide in word learning

Object-evidence and mutual exclusivity bias

First words reflect the object-bias

* Words are for identifying objects/referring
* Words are also social constructs that presuppose „commitment“

4. What pieces of language are “perceived categorically”?

5. Parents provide the input/“rich“ language data to the kid‘s mind

6. Hearing but storing mental representation of what’s heard

hearing doesn’t imply retrieving meanings

Experiments w. 14-month olds

**Sound bundles stored become containers for meaning**

7. What are the cues to discovering conceptual categories?

the word itself becomes a CUE leading the mind to what the word is for > words have meaning and are intended to refer

learning while overgeneralizing and underspecifying

8. 1 to 4-year olds’ gaining knowledge of patterns, vocabulary and grammar

9. OUTCOME: Building and knowing words

Using many grammar rules but not all

Weak in reading other minds

Weak in recursive syntax

10. Pre-schoolers’ knowledge of vocabulary and grammar

Vocab of tens of 1000s

Almost adult-like syntax

word order patterns

words built by morphemes

11. **Infants gain grammar /make the leap from poorly fitted words to composing them**

**12. How do kids learn to generalize? p.175**

**13. According to what cues do babies form grammatical categories?**

**Getting the WORD STRUCTURE P. 173**

of inflecting, deriving and compounding

predicting word meanings through types of morphemes TABLE p. 171

of irregular nouns, verbs, etc.

from remembering patterns to **generalizing** **implies forming rules**

**14. How does the child’s brain learn to use allomorphs?**

Sensitivity to sounds is useful in dealing with morphemes of nouns and verbs

e.g. simplifying consonant clusters (hands> hens)

**Gaining RULES out of patterns:** noun plural suffix is S/Z/IZ, depending on the consonant preceding it > trucks, beds and watches

**15. Kids don’t learn by repetition** dialogue p. 176

**16. How to account for how toddlers and kids deal with grammar without the support of UG?**

**17. 3 options in infants’ learning** of words and word forms:

memorizing and retrieving units

drawing analogies and finding similarities without RULES by depending on statistics

*is* goed *constructed by* *analogy with* showed?

from ANALOGY to extracting abstract RULES

18. How are COMPOUNDS learned wince their meanings are mostly unpredictable?

a compound is a noun rather than a phrase: e.g. *life-boat-sales-girl*> *life-boat-sales-girl****s***

**19. 2 distinct psychological mechanisms: Composing or retrieving**

1. Statistics, i.e. frequent verbs, nouns, adjectives in various forms (*go, want sleep…*)?
2. Forms are units rather than compositions
3. Forms fitted by analogies
4. Systematic patterns by rules  **P. 178**

**20. The 2 mechanisms parallel to 2 streams of learning in brain P. 177 tracts/networks** frontal/dorsal/**rules** and temporal/ventral/content/**memory**

* **Making sense doesn’t imply internalizing grammar**
* **Words elicit alternative patterns of brain activity**

**21. In what stages does the mind learn categories of speech that are less prominent perceptually than nouns referring to objects?**

**22. Why are verbs difficult for a baby even though they appear in all languages in abundance?**

Verbs are structured morphologically p. 169

and syntactically

**SYNTAX**

**23. Kids’ first words = adults’ sentences**

… difficult to infer what they imply

**24. Syntactic bootstrapping as a tool to learn parts of speech**/lexical categories**:**

the experiment with in/transitive verbs (*wave* vs. *push*) used in a video w. duck and rabbit:

Do kids distinguish the kinds of 2 action even when represented by a single verb?

25. Learning through FRAMES and verb argument structures:

*so (good), very…, the… baby…*