

Development of Morphology, Syntax, and Semantics

Unit 5

NAMS

2025-11-16



Development of Morphology

- The age of two and a half
- Incorporating some inflectional morphemes and functional morphemes.
- Order of appearance:
 - First to appear, *-ing* (cat sitting, mommy reading book)
 - Prepositions *in* and *on* in either order.
 - The regular plural marker with the *-s* form (boys, cats, dogs, etc.)
 - **Overgeneralization** starts to appear (foots, mans).
 - Irregular plurals (*men*, *feet*) (overgeneralized= two feets)
 - Irregular past tense (*came*, *went*) and possessive *-s* (mommy's book) in either order.
 - Verb "*to be*" (is, are)
 - Articles (a cat, the dog)
 - Regular past tense with *-ed* (it opened, he walked) (overgeneralized = walkeded, goed, comed, wented)
 - Present tense *-s* (comes, knows)



- The formation of questions and the use of negatives are two structures that are acquired in a regular way by English-speaking children
- Both appear in 3 stages:
 - First stage- 18 to 26 months
 - Second stage- 22 to 36 months
 - Third stage- 24 to 40 months

Stages can vary quite a bit.



Forming Questions

- Stage 1:
 - 1 or 2 words + rising intonation (*Doggie?*)
 - add the *wh* form (*Where*) at the beginning of sentences (*Where kitty?*)
- Stage 2:
 - 2 or 3 words + rising intonation (**You want eat?**)
 - add What and Why (**What book name?**)
- Stage 3:
 - 3 or 4 words + **inversion** (**Can I have a piece?**)
 - add Who and How (*How is that open?*)
 - non-adult forms (*Why kitty can't do it?*)



Forming Negatives

- Stage 1:
 - add *no* or *not* to beginning (No mitten)
- Stage 2:
 - add *no* or *not* to verb (He no bite you)
 - add *don't* or *can't* to verb (You can't dance)
- Stage 3:
 - add *didn't* or *won't* (I didn't caught it)
 - non-adult forms (*He not taking it*)



- **Overextension**

- Starts from 12 months
- The child overextends the meaning of a word on the basis of similarities of shape, sound, and size.
- Example: The word ball for apple, tomato, orange, etc.
- Mostly found in expressive language and not receptive language.
- It is assumed by age 5, a child has completed the greater part of the basic language acquisition process.



