

## THE LANGUAGE INSTINCT (Steven Pinker vs Noam Chomsky)

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### Abstract

Language is a communication tool used in daily interaction. Language used to convey meaning to someone with easy word order understandable. Therefore, in order to convey the meaning clearly, use of the correct language is very important. This paper examines Steve Pinker's arguments for the existence of a language instinct encoded in the genes of human beings as an explanation for the human language capacity. The analysis covers Pinker's own arguments as well as those by Chomsky and by other authors in the 1990s. Argument of Steven Pinker language is first and foremost a product of our biological make-up as a species. Pinker does not mean to deny the influence of culture on language, but means that language grows out of the "predisposition" or biological readiness of every normal human being. Human infants have a natural gift for quickly absorbing and then using the structures of spoken language used by others around them. According to Chomsky, children are born with the tools of acquisition Language. " language acquisition device (LAD). This tool is a biological gift that has been programmed to detail the possible items of a grammar. LAD is considered to be a specialized physiological part of the brain to process language. So it can be seen that experts have given the same theory and opinion regarding the way of language development and acquisition, which is related to the language instinct that has existed since in the womb.

**Key Word : The Language Instinct**

### 1. INTRODUCTION

Language is a multi discussed and controversial topic For many years. But recently there was something new. There is an interest in this topic among linguists, Some are from everyday experience: Everyone has questions about language, specifically how the development of language from birth until speak the language correctly. Language development isn't driven by general communicative utility. Children do not always speak well just to get more cookies, more food, and more play outside. Many of the changes seen in child development simply result in their language becoming more grammatically appropriate to the language they are learning. Here is an example. Use verbs such as "cut, " "hit, " and "put." Children go through the stages of making mistakes such as "cutted," "hitted, " and "putted. They could say it as appropriate as the instincts they've got. Interested in all aspects of human language, an experimental psychologist who studies language for a living: how children learn language, how people put sentences together in their minds and understand sentences in conversation, where language is situated in the brain, and how it changes over history. By Steven Pinker, written for a general audience. Pinker argues that humans are born

with an innate capacity for language. He deals sympathetically with Noam Chomsky's claim that all human language shows evidence of a universal grammar. refers to Chomsky's concept of a universal grammar, a meta-grammar into which all human languages fit. Pinker explains that a universal grammar represents specific structures in the human brain that recognize the general rules of other humans' speech, such as whether the local language places adjectives before or after nouns, and begin a specialized and very rapid learning process not explainable as reasoning from first principles or pure logic.

Based on the statements above mean that biological ability is there in the babies' mind before their birth in their mothers' womb. Language development, then could be only a maturational matter. This study explain why language is considered as the language instinct.

## Literature Review

### The Language Instinct by Steven Pinker

Steven Pinker is a Canadian-American cognitive psychologist, psycholinguist, popular science author and public intellectual, written for a general audience. Pinker argues that humans are born with an innate capacity for language. Pinker deals sympathetically with Noam Chomsky's claim that all human language shows evidence of a universal grammar. Pinker (1994:265-301) highlights the idea that language is innate. Thus, babies continue to learn the sounds of their language throughout the first year. By six months, they are beginning to lump together the distinct sounds that their language collapses into a single phoneme, while continuing to discriminate equivalently distinct ones that their language keeps separate. By ten months they are no longer universal phoneticians but have turned to their parents. Babies make this transition before they produce or understand words, so their learning cannot be listening for the difference in sound between words they think means bit and a word they think means beet, because they have learnt neither word. They must be sorting the sounds directly, somehow tuning their speech analysis module to deliver the phonemes used in their language. The module can then serve as the front end of the system that learns words and grammar (Kuhl et. al., 1992: 606-608)

Stage	Typical Age				Description
Bubbling	0;	6 - 0;	8		Repetitive CV patterns.
One -Word	0;	9 - 1;	6		Single open-class words or word stems.
Two-Word	1;	6 - 2 ;	0		"Mini-sentences" with simple semantic relations.
Early Multiword	2;	0 - 2;	6		"Telegraphic" sentence structures of lexical rather than functional or grammatical morphemes.
Later Multiword	2;	6 - on			Grammatical or functional structures emerge.

Pinker (1994) argues that all languages are built on the same universal grammar and that the language mechanism is built into the human brain; thus the basic structures of language are a

part of our biological inheritance. According to Pinker, our language ability is an instinct that is the result of a biological arrangement in the brain. Children can learn their first language not only from the surrounding but it is an innate skill from birth. Human language environment is very different from animals and other artificial communication systems. Called unique or different because of two things,

- The first is the design of human language allows us to form infinite expressions or utterances.
- Second, the main location of our language is in the brain.

The newborn babies have language skills that are not obtained from the learning process, but are an innate ability. So they have linguistic abilities from birth. They tend to have their own language patterns when born to express their desires and feelings, this is not taught by their parents or the environment. Then over time, these abilities develop coupled with the influence of the surrounding environment and humans begin to learn the rules of their grammar. As babies, they use signals to indicate boredom. Then, almost all babies tend to babble with the same sound, at the age of 6 months babies begin to put the babbling sounds together, at one year old, they begin to understand words and begin to produce them as well. The first word they say is usually an object, action or routine used in social interactions, Then at the age of 18 months, there is a growth in vocabulary and begins to form two word combinations such as 'I'm sitting.' 'Daddy's gone' etc. Around three years old, children will begin to use grammatical rules, although errors are still common in their use. This error is usually the result of overgeneralizing. For example in English, children tend to use the ending -ed such as holded which should be held and finded which should be found. Pinker explains that such errors usually occur due to faulty memory, and that irregular verbs in English must be removed because they are new or different forms from the original. So when children should use irregular verbs but they don't find them in memory, then what they will do is apply the -ed rule.

### **Language Universals by Noam Chomsky**

American-born linguist Noam Chomsky argues that language is a natural object, to be studied in the same way as other natural object such as the solar system or clouds (Chomsky (1994). Noam Chomsky asserts that language is innate. American-born linguist Noam Chomsky believes that we are born with a predisposition to learn language. The essence of his theories of language acquisition state that human beings are pre-wired to learn language and in fact are born with the basic rules for language intact. Many of the unique details of any specific language structure are heavily influenced by the environment, but according to Chomsky, the human brain is ready made to quickly acquire language at specific stages in the developmental process. According to Chomsky, language is one characteristic that is unique to humans among all other living beings. Chomsky's theories have made it easier to understand the evolution and development of the languages.

According to Noam Chomsky that language is already in the child. By the time a person is born, he already has a set of language skills which is called "General Grammar" or "Universal Grammar". This theory say that although the knowledge that is in the child is not get a lot of stimulation. Children will still get study it. Children not only imitate the language they hear, but

they are also able to draw conclusions from existing patterns. Because the child has a language system called the Language Mastery Device.

According to Chomsky language can only be mastered by humans. This opinion based on assumptions: First, language behavior is something that inherited (genetic); The pattern of language development is the same in all species language and culture (is something universal) and the environment only plays a small role in the language maturation process. Second, language can be mastered in a short time, a four year old child can already speak similar to adults. Third, the child's language environment cannot provide sufficient data for the mastery of complex grammar of people mature.

According to Chomsky, children are born equipped with tools of "language acquisition device (LAD)". This tool is a gift biologically that has been programmed to detect the possible items of a grammar. LAD is considered a specialized physiological part of the brain to process language, and has nothing to do with cognitive abilities other. Therefore, humans have been biologically equipped by nature to produce language, through the tools of speech (tongue, lips, oral cavity, hearing aids) as well as to understand the meaning of the language.

Chomsky concluded that children must have an inborn faculty for language acquisition. According to this theory, the process is biologically determined - the human species has evolved a brain whose neural circuits contain linguistic information at birth. The child's natural predisposition to learn language is triggered by hearing speech and the child's brain is able to interpret what s/he hears according to the underlying principles or structures it already contains. This natural faculty has become known as the Language Acquisition Device (LAD). Chomsky did not suggest that an English child is born knowing anything specific about English, of course. He stated that all human languages share common principles. (For example, they all have words for things and actions - nouns and verbs.) It is the child's task to establish how the specific language s/he hears expresses these underlying principles. For example, the LAD already contains the concept of verb tense. By listening to such forms as "worked", "played" and "patted", the child will form the hypothesis that the past tense of verbs is formed by adding the sound /d/, /t/ or /id/ to the base form.

## Discussion

Language is described as an "instinct": people "know" how to talk in more or less the sense that spiders know how to spin webs. Webs' spinning were not invented by some unsung spider genius and does not depend on having had the right education or on having an apt or architecture or the construction trades. Nothing that is worth knowing can be taught. A preschooler's tacit knowledge of grammar is more sophisticated than the thickest type manual or the most state of –the art computer language system. Language is an "instinct" in the sense that it is a "factually", a "module", or a "mental organ". As such, it is considered one aspect of the human intellect that comes from sectionalized neutral circularity. Four kinds of evidence have been suggested to prove that language is an instinct.

1. Universally this is the first step to establishing innateness. Every human society has complex grammar. There is no such thing as a Stone Age language.

2. Universality of speech formation: all languages Use nouns, verbs, themes, objects, case, and vocabularies.
3. Language development in children: Children begin to babble in their first year of life. First words appear at about one year of age. This subject is to be discussed in the subject entitled The Stages of Language Learning.
4. The final bit of evidence is that language has neurologically and genetic spatiality. The brain organized into systems.

Humans have an innate language instinct, which allows to tackle communication on a whole other level. Since children learn grammar without studying it, they must have an innate capability to understand it. There are two central principles behind all languages, which make them learnable. Do not have to worry about correct grammar so much, as its rules are only one part of using language correctly.

### Conclusion

This study has illustrated that language has a distinct piece of the biological make-up of our brains that God grants us. It is so amazing that children acquire complex system in a short time and effortlessly. The standpoint is that babies are biologically born talking. Language is an instinct: a complex, specialized skill, which develops in the child spontaneously without conscious efforts or formal instruction. It is an instinct evolved in the human brain coming from specialized neural circuitry. The finding that a child is found speaking immediately after its birth is found to be replicated many times.

Language Instinct divides into five parts: An exploration of the claim that language is instinctive and intentional, that it is hard-wired into our brains in some way so that we cannot help but use language. An explanation in terms of grammar (Chomsky's "computational procedure") and lexicon of how we acquire the ability to express ourselves in a language irrespective of the language we express ourselves in. An explanation of how language works in terms of human physiology and human brain-the physical basis of language. An examination of the evolution and genetic basis of language. The relationship between language and the mind Language instinct is biologically there in the babies' minds and in their mothers' womb before their birth. For example, some studies have shown that some infants enter the world with some knowledge of their mother's language: some four-day-old French babies suck harder to hear French than Russian, and pick up their sucking more when a tape changes from Russian to French than from French to Russian. So infants come biologically equipped with a complex skill called language. After babies' birth language development could be only a maturational timetable.

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