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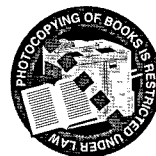
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## CHAPTER 2

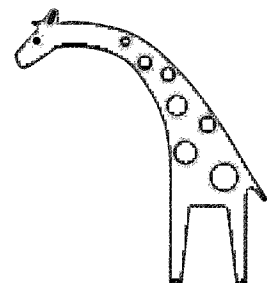
# Theories and Phases of Oral Language Development

### CHAPTER OBJECTIVES

This chapter will increase your understanding of:

- the major theoretical perspectives for children's language development and learning
- how different theories can explain and inform children's oral language development
- identifiable phases of early childhood language learning and development

In this chapter you are introduced to a range of language acquisition and language learning theories, each of which has an influence on your understanding of children's language growth and how best to nurture it. The chapter also provides an overview of the phases through which children are likely to progress as they develop into competent language users—each phase indicating knowledge, skill and behaviour milestones achieved. An understanding of developmental phases is useful for the design of learning environments and programs that align with children's present knowledge and abilities, and supports their further learning and development. However, it is necessary to keep in mind that, although it is useful to consider learning and development in terms of phases, each child's language growth is different and is influenced by factors beyond chronological age (Owens, 2005).



## THEORETICAL PERSPECTIVES OF LANGUAGE DEVELOPMENT

For the past century or so, several theoretical perspectives have influenced educators' thinking about how language develops and what kinds of practices parents and educators should adopt to foster children's language acquisition, development and learning. In this chapter, six main perspectives of language learning, as listed below, are described and critiqued.

- behaviourist
- nativist
- maturational
- cognitive developmental
- interactionist
- neurobiological.



Language learning requires an environment that is rich in experience.

### BEHAVIOURIST PERSPECTIVE

According to the behaviourist perspective, learning is very much shaped by the environment and by personal experience; thus, nurture rather than nature plays the dominant role in language learning. Those who say that 'nature' plays the main role in children's language learning believe that a person's genetic make-up determines the learning. Others believe that the environment and personal experience (nurture) play the greatest role in learning or acquisition of

language. In reality, there is complex interplay between nature and nurture, and the simplistic nature–nurture debate is outdated (Christie, 2005). The behaviourist perspective, which was predominant for much of the first half of the twentieth century, posits that people learn largely by receiving rewards for behaviours they exhibit. According to this perspective, language is learnt by means of imitation, practice, feedback or reinforcement of accomplishments (Hulit & Howard, 2006, p. 19; Lightbown & Spada, 1993, p. 9). Central to this perspective is the role of the environment: language learning requires an environment that is rich in experience and language, and that provides much-needed models of language that children imitate and with which they can experiment. It also requires consistent reinforcement (for example, praise from others or successful communication by the child) to ensure that certain behaviours (language) are repeated and that further imitation and practice occurs.

Imitative behaviour requires that children pay attention to, and copy, adult 'models' or examples of behaviour. Adult modelling may be deliberate or unintended. The idea that parents and teachers should provide models of language is still prevalent in education, and many recommended practices involve the provision of models from which children can learn.

Behaviourists claim that **operant conditioning** (Skinner, 1957) accounts for children's expressive (spoken) language learning. This involves children imitating, or experimenting with, the sounds and patterns that they hear and receiving positive reinforcement by parents, siblings and others around them for doing so (Lightbown & Spada, 1993, p. 9). Reinforcement might be attention, praise or positive body language, or it might simply be successful communication—for instance, when they receive whatever it was they were attempting to ask for. For example, an infant might say, 'Da-da-da!', and be hugged and kissed and rewarded with, 'Yes, Daddy is here!' If children's behaviour is ignored (not positively reinforced) or even punished, it eventually ceases. Young children soon learn if they are rewarded when they imitate adult speech and behaviour. This increases imitative behaviour, which leads to yet more language learning.

According to the behaviourist perspective, children learn to understand language (receptive language) through of **classical conditioning**. The idea is that children learn to associate objects or actions with words because their environment provides them with the repeated opportunity to hear words while at the same time seeing the objects and actions to which they are linked. For example, a child will come to know what *milk* is if it is named each time it is offered. For example, 'Here's your milk. Are you ready for some milk?'

Criticisms of the behaviourist perspective include:

- It does not adequately account for the rapid rate at which children learn language. The opportunities for imitation and reinforcement are not great enough. The performance displayed by children 'far exceeds the input of the adults in the environment' (Campbell & Baker, 2003, p. 41).
- People's ability to understand language does not account for the many words, phrases and sentences that are quite ambiguous and that can have more than one meaning (e.g. Emmitt et al., 2006).
- Another area unsatisfactorily explained by behaviourists is the exact role of reward. Is reward entirely necessary for language growth?
- Finally, speaking and listening are closely interrelated but the behaviourist perspective implies that they are learnt by two different processes (operant and classical conditioning), which is unlikely to be the case.



## NATIVIST PERSPECTIVE

According to the nativist perspective, language learning is a biological phenomenon and the role played by the environment and other people is minimal. In other words, *nature* as opposed to *nurture* largely accounts for its development. Chomsky (1975), a major contributor to the nativist theory of language learning, asserted that the human brain is structured to learn and use language and this is illustrated by its almost astonishing capacity to create and understand syntactic systems, or grammatical rules. Chomsky called this brain capacity a **language acquisition device** (LAD). Because of the LAD, language learning is said by nativists to be essentially different from other kinds of learning. For evidence, nativists have cited the fact that children are adept at generating rules of grammar. The fact that they often ‘overgeneralise’ grammatical rules is one expression of this. For example, when a child says, ‘The dog swimm~~ed~~’, he or she is generating or transferring rules, albeit not appropriately, because of the irregularity of the verb ‘to swim’. Another example of children generating rules of grammar is the Nicaraguan deaf children who invented their own sign language because their carers did not know sign language (Senghas & Coppola, 2001, cited in Arshavsky, 2009). The sign language they invented became a full-bodied language with its own grammatical rules.

Chomsky proposed that children are born with the ability to generate grammar, thanks to a **universal grammar** (Chomsky, 1982), which is a set of principles that underlie all languages. He discussed the fact that all children are born with the capacity to learn any language, and that language has a ‘deep structure’ as well as a ‘surface structure’. The deep structure roughly equates to the meaning, while the surface structure is to do with the words and sentences used to convey the deep structure.

Nativists have used the following arguments to support their theory:

- Children learn their native language at a time when such a complex level of learning is not normally expected.
- Imitation and habit formation (behaviourist theory) alone cannot adequately account for the fact that children acquire language quite early and at a fairly rapid rate.
- The language models to which young children are exposed are often more complex and varied than the language that they themselves generate; young children create sentences that they have never heard others use.
- Children show that they are generating their own system of rules when they overgeneralise grammatical rules (e.g. ‘I runned away’).
- Despite the often quite different environments in which children grow up, most still achieve mastery of the grammatical structures of a language.

A significant assumption of the nativist view of language acquisition is that people’s capacity to learn their native language does not continue indefinitely but that there is a critical time in which a person’s brain is predisposed for optimal success with language learning. While the exact time at which the critical period ends is not known, it is thought to be around puberty; though there is some argument that it may be even earlier than this.

A major criticism of the nativist perspective is that it does not adequately take into account environmental and social influences or the role of other people in children’s language development. If educators adhered strictly to this perspective, it would not be necessary to teach language because children would instinctively learn all they needed to know.

## MATURATIONAL PERSPECTIVE

Maturationists have contributed to the debate on how language is learnt by proposing that biological **readiness** is the key to effective learning. According to this view, language develops or unfolds in a predetermined fashion, according to the child’s ‘inner clock’ (Jalongo, 2007, p. 66). The inner clocks of individual children may vary somewhat. Jean-Jacques Rousseau was an influential eighteenth-century theorist who advocated the idea of allowing children to grow naturally, with minimal interference. In early childhood educational contexts, many current practices have their roots in the maturational perspective. When educators speak of developmental phases and developmentally appropriate practice, they are using ideas from maturational perspectives.

This perspective can be criticised because it tends to under-emphasise the role of social input. It also implies that there is a universal developmental pathway that all children will follow, and clearly this is not the case; for example, in the case of children from diverse linguistic and cultural backgrounds. Also, this perspective has led to some questionable practices that have attempted to accelerate ‘readiness’ so that teaching can commence.

## COGNITIVE DEVELOPMENTAL PERSPECTIVE

Another influential perspective has grown from the writing of Jean Piaget, who did a great deal of work on cognitive development in children. The cognitive developmental perspective posits that language development occurs in tandem with cognitive development, and is developed through activity. That is, children *construct* their own understandings through interaction with their environment and participation in experiences, and both the environment and heredity play a part in language development. Unlike the nativist perspective, the cognitive development perspective does not propose that language learning is essentially different from any other type of learning; there is no special language-acquisition device or special innate ability.

This theory is discussed in greater detail in Chapter 6, which focuses on language, thinking and learning. However, it is useful at this stage to understand the stages of cognitive (and language development) proposed by Piaget.

Piaget proposed several stages of cognitive development, the first of which is the *sensorimotor stage*, which involves young children finding out about the world through their senses and movements. It is only once babies realise that there is permanency in the world, and that objects and people exist (even when they are out of sight), that they can begin to attach names to objects or are able to use symbols. Language is a symbolic system and children cannot begin to attach symbols to referents (objects and actions that are represented by the symbols) until they have a sense of what the objects and actions are. Thus, according to Piaget, it is not possible for children to learn language until they have almost passed through this phase.

The second phase of cognitive development, according to Piaget, is the *pre-operational stage*, which usually occurs in children aged between two and seven years. During this phase, children are thought to be fairly egocentric and unable to think on an abstract level. This limits their ability to speak about abstract concepts and to comprehend talk that is removed from the concrete here and now.

The next stage, the *concrete operational stage*, generally spans the ages of seven to eleven or twelve. Here, children begin to think logically (inductive logic) but still have

difficulty with abstract concepts or hypothetical 'what if' situations. Inductive logic involves making generalisations from specific examples given. During this stage of cognitive development, children learn much about morphology, syntax, semantics and pragmatics of language.

## INTERACTIONIST PERSPECTIVE

The interactionist perspective emphasises social interactions between children and the significant people in their environment as being the key to language learning and development. The focus on communicative intent is important to these interactions; that is, there is a purpose and a desire to put across meaning. Young children who are not yet able to produce words or language forms will apply communicative intent to their interactions with people; for example, a very young child who wants a drink might indicate this by making eye contact with a parent, pointing to the fridge and vocalising an utterance such as 'mi ... mi'. Language acquisition is assisted when the parent responds by providing a language model appropriate to the child's communicative objective. In the example provided, the parent might respond by saying, 'You want some milk? Mummy will get you some milk.'

Bruner has proposed that a **language acquisition support system** (LASS) assists children to learn language. By this, Bruner meant to highlight the importance of social interaction in the development of language. For social interactionists, **scaffolding** and support from competent language users is the key driver of language development, and not merely innate cognitive 'wiring' (LAD) as proposed by nativists. 'Scaffolding' involves an adult providing support and guidance to enable a child to achieve something that would be slightly too difficult if he or she tried to do it independently. The notion of providing scaffolding or support, so that a child can achieve at a higher level than he or she would have been able to manage without help, is important.

This perspective integrates and expands ideas from the perspectives already discussed:

- It acknowledges the importance of the environment in that it purports that children learn language as a result of communicative needs, in social contexts, and with social support.
- It acknowledges the role of the human mind; of children's predisposition to learn language easily.
- It proposes that the LAD and the LASS work together in the language development process.

An important feature of child-caregiver interactions is the caregiver's use of *child directed speech*; that is, the ways in which they adjust their language to suit the capabilities of young learners and to make it easier for them to understand (Lightbown & Spada, 2003, p. 22). This generally involves the use of:

- short simple sentences
- substantial pauses
- repetition of the language models provided
- a somewhat higher pitch than usual
- exaggerated intonation patterns
- emphasis on key (meaning words) in a sentence.

According to interactionists, the support provided by caregivers is fundamental to children's language development. In speaking with children, caregivers generally use language that is just beyond that which children could produce on their own. In so doing, they provide the language models which serve to expand the form and meaning of the language children already know and use. Over time, and as children's use of language expands, carers continue to modify their language use. Because language development is seen to develop within social contexts, the *role of play* is highlighted in this context. Through play, children find opportunities to experiment with language and to take on different roles, especially in the context of socio-dramatic play.

The interactionist framework gives some credence to the part biological factors play in children's language development. Such factors as the innate human capacity for language acquisition, as well as maturation and cognitive ability, are viewed as having some influence on children's language development. However, interactionist theory holds that such factors are not as great an influence as the social interactions between children and the people in their lives.

## NEUROBIOLOGICAL PERSPECTIVE

Since the beginning of the 1990s, new brain imaging techniques such as fMRI (functional magnetic resonance imaging) and PET (positron emission tomography) have enabled scientists to study the brain and its workings during certain cognitive activities, such as listening and reading. Neurobiologists have determined that the capacity to learn language can be attributed to the structure of the brain. There are, in fact, specialised areas of the brain that are devoted to hearing, speaking and understanding language. The findings of neurobiologists have supported elements of behaviourist, nativist and social interactionist

Table 2.1: Summary: Theoretical perspectives of language development

Behaviourist	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Language is a learnt behaviour</li> <li>• Learning is dependent on reinforcement or reward for behaviour</li> <li>• The environment, experiences and reinforcement from caregivers is significant</li> </ul>
Nativist	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Language learning is different from other kinds of learning</li> <li>• It is an innate ability of all humans</li> </ul>
Maturationist	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Language unfolds or develops naturally according to an 'inner clock'</li> <li>• Adults should interfere with this process as little as possible</li> </ul>
Cognitive development	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Language development and general cognitive development occur together</li> <li>• Much is determined by the child's stage of cognitive development</li> </ul>
Interactionist	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Social interaction, especially interaction with a high level of support to the child, is highly important for language learning</li> <li>• Social interaction can speed up cognitive development and language learning</li> </ul>
Neurobiological	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• The brain is naturally structured for language learning (as shown by brain scans)</li> <li>• Brain development is influenced by the environment and social interaction</li> </ul>



views of language learning: that the brain is 'hard wired' to learn language, but effective language learning also depends to a substantial degree on social interaction and occurs within communicative contexts. Without quality language input or social interaction with parents or caregivers, babies' neural networks do not develop effectively to enable fluent language use. In other words, connections between brain cells are only made when children are exposed to, and engaged in, language use.

It must be noted that there has been considerable debate about the different theories of language development. It is important to remember that language is complex and its 'development defies any simplistic description' (Fleer & Raban, 2007, p. 27).

## PHASES AND MILESTONES OF ORAL LANGUAGE DEVELOPMENT

The notion of language development phases implies that there is a common developmental pathway that all children will follow. However, while phases of development and characteristic language knowledge and abilities can be identified, language learning and development is not identical for all children. There are considerable variations in the way children progress to become competent with oral language; the 'inner clocks' will vary from child to child and there are also environmental factors that influence their language growth. Some children will sometimes seem to 'go backwards' in some areas as they experiment with language.



While there is a common developmental pathway, language learning and development is not identical for all children.

The chart below provides an overview of phases of language development and of the typical competencies of each phase. These phases provide teachers with a useful framework for planning and assessment. However, it must be re-emphasised that these are guidelines only, and there will be variations for many children.

Table 2.2: Newborns

Receptive language	Expressive language
<p>Newborns listen to the sounds around them and are soon able to distinguish language sounds from other sounds. They 'startle' at unexpected noises and they respond to new sounds by becoming very still.</p> <p>In order to develop effectively as listeners, babies need to be in environments where they can hear a variety of sounds. They need to be spoken to a great deal by parents and caregivers.</p>	<p>Newborn babies make a range of noises, some of which indicate whether they are experiencing pain or pleasure. Communication with others may not be intentional.</p>

Table 2.3: Up to three months

Receptive language	Expressive language
<p>Very young babies (two to three months) turn towards the source of a voice and smile at speakers. They seem to enjoy listening to familiar voices such as the mother's and father's, especially if comforting tones are used. They quieten and pay particular attention to new voices.</p> <p>Babies may pay more attention to 'parentese' or 'baby talk' (previously known as 'motherese'), where adults speak in an exaggerated way, using simplified language and a high-pitched voice that is somewhat slower and more repetitive than normal speech.</p>	<p>Babies in this age group smile at familiar people when they see them, and smile and gurgle when spoken to. They develop different ways of crying for different purposes, which parents can often 'read'.</p>

Table 2.4: Four to six months

Receptive language	Expressive language
<p>Infants of this age begin to respond to the word, 'No!', although it is not known whether they recognise the intonation or the word. Infants respond to the tone of a speaker's voice.</p> <p>Environmental sounds begin to become interesting, and infants in this age group begin to enjoy toys that make noises, music, and other everyday sounds.</p>	<p>Infants at this age become verbally responsive to the language they hear. They begin to experiment with the sounds that they can make with their mouth and voice, and to mimic speakers. Listening and speaking become intertwined.</p> <p>Babbling becomes very prominent in this age range and infants begin to use the lips to make sounds. They use various sounds in an attempt to communicate.</p>



Table 2.5: Seven to twelve months

Receptive language	Expressive language
<p>Infants in this age group become responsive when spoken to, and pay attention when called by name. Games like 'peek-a-boo' engage them.</p> <p>Infants recognise the names of common objects and will sometimes respond (by looking, pointing or touching) to simple requests such as, 'Where's the doggie?', or 'Give me the doll.' They respond to simple questions, such as, 'More?'</p> <p>Babies in this age group usually have a receptive vocabulary of a few words.</p>	<p>Infants of this age begin to take on conventions of listening and speaking, such as turn-taking and eye contact and, by approximately nine months, they begin to understand and use goal-oriented language and body language, such as indicating that they want more food, or to be picked up.</p> <p>Babies' babbling becomes more complex, and includes more consonants as well as long and short vowels. The first words have, by now, been uttered. They are often words such as 'Mama' or 'Dad-da'.</p>

Table 2.6: One to two years

Receptive language	Expressive language
<p>From twelve months of age to eighteen months, toddlers' oral language capabilities grow very rapidly. They continue to learn conventions, such as turn-taking and looking at the person who is speaking. As well, their comprehension of words and syntactic structures increases dramatically. Indicators of these understandings are children's ability to point to pictures in books when they are named.</p> <p>Children in this age group can also respond to simple commands such as 'Roll the ball.' They enjoy stories and rhymes and will enjoy the repetition of favourites.</p>	<p>Young children in this age group learn many more single words and begin to speak in 'telegraphic' sentences of two words, and sometimes three words. Examples are, 'More milk?' and, 'Daddy gone.' Their pronunciation becomes clearer. By the age of two, children are usually able to say approximately 200 words.</p>

Table 2.7: Two to three years

Receptive language	Expressive language
<p>Young children of two to three years particularly enjoy listening to rhymes and stories, although younger children and babies can also participate in these listening activities.</p> <p>By the age of three, many children have grown in their ability to engage in verbal interactions with others—in short conversations in which they take turns to listen and speak.</p> <p>They comprehend commands that are composed of two steps, such as, 'Get the teddy and put it in the box.' They also begin to understand contrasting concepts or 'opposites', such as hot/cold, big/little, in/out.</p>	<p>At this phase in their oral language development, young children's expressive vocabulary expands at a rapid rate. By the age of three, they have an expressive vocabulary of up to 1000 words.</p> <p>Generally, their utterances are confined to only two or three words but can be understood by others, especially family members. Their sentences are simple and usually have a subject and a verb.</p>

Table 2.8: Three to four years

Receptive language	Expressive language
<p>Three- and four-year-old children can understand a range of sentence structures, including questions that start with 'who', 'what' and 'where'.</p> <p>If a child has a hearing difficulty, it often becomes noticeable at this age.</p>	<p>Children begin to use four or more words in their sentences, and are able to talk about things that are less concrete and immediate. For example, they may talk about friends, places they have been and things they have done.</p> <p>Their speech becomes clearer and more fluent and is easier to understand.</p> <p>Children in this age group ask many questions. By the age of four, they know approximately 1500 words.</p>

Table 2.9: Four to five years

Receptive language	Expressive language
<p>Children in this age group usually enjoy listening to stories and can answer simple questions about them.</p> <p>Their listening comprehension is at the stage where they can understand most things that are said to them. They are able to understand three-step commands, such as, 'Get the crayons out of the box then go to the table and draw a picture.'</p>	<p>By now, children can construct fairly detailed sentences, using compound and complex sentences and using pronouns and past tense. Most sounds are now pronounced correctly. They are able to discuss their feelings and are thus using language for a wider range of purposes. By the age of five, they usually have a vocabulary of approximately 2000 words.</p>

Table 2.10: Five to six years

Receptive language	Expressive language
<p>By the age of six, children have a very large receptive vocabulary of approximately 20,000 words. They understand many sentences, including complex sentences.</p>	<p>By six years of age, children generally have an expressive vocabulary of approximately 2600 words. They can form all types of sentences—statements, commands, questions and exclamations—and can construct simple, compound and complex sentences.</p>

Table 2.11: Six to eight years

Receptive language	Expressive language
<p>By the age of six to eight years, most children have a receptive vocabulary of up to 8000 words. Children of this age have generally learnt that different language behaviour is called for according to the context. Thus, their listening and speaking behaviours will vary according to factors such as the formality of the context.</p>	<p>Children in this age group are able to verbalise for a variety of reasons. They can talk about their feelings and ideas, and can verbalise problems and how they might be solved. They tend to talk a lot.</p>





Neurobiologists have determined that the capacity to learn language can be attributed to the structure of the brain.

## ORAL LANGUAGE DEVELOPMENT IN CHILDCARE AND EDUCATION SETTINGS

In many ways, the language requirements of children in care and education settings are quite unlike the language they are familiar with at home. 'Classroom talk' is often different from home talk, and more so for children from lower socio-economic and cultural minority backgrounds. Fler and Raban (2007, pp. 30–2) note that 'home talk' has the following characteristics:

- known patterns of discourse
  - usually contains short exchanges
  - has an immediate here and now purpose
  - supports successful communication
  - involves many long interactions and is usually between a child and an adult or a child and other children of various ages
  - the audience is usually known to the child.
- In contrast, school talk:
- often uses unfamiliar patterns of discourse
  - demands lengthy periods of listening
  - often has a 'delayed' purpose
  - involves many brief interactions
  - is often between children of the same age group
  - may involve an unfamiliar audience.

To be successful in school, children are required to learn the discourses of the classroom. There is, in short, a requirement to learn how to use language for learning.

There are many articulations of how children's language development might be conceptualised in terms of phases. A popular one in Australia is the *First steps speaking and listening map of development* (Brace, Brockhoff, Sparkes & Tuckey, 2006) which proposes seven phases of oral language development in children from pre-school onwards. Only the first four are relevant to children in early childhood (pre-school–Year 3) settings and are outlined in Table 2.12.

Table 2.12: Overview: Speaking and listening development

Phase of speaking and listening development ( <i>First steps</i> )	What children can do
Beginning	Children use and comprehend simple language of the home and community, using non-verbal cues to support their comprehension. They often speak in short utterances and may require considerable support in novel contexts.
Early	Children use their home language to communicate everyday needs, express themselves and their ideas and to enquire through the asking of questions. They understand social and personal functions of language and they respond in 'their own way', but not necessarily in a conventional way, although they are becoming aware of conventions of speaking and listening.
Exploratory	Children in the exploratory phase use standard forms of language (e.g. Standard Australian English) within familiar contexts and are able to communicate in both informal and formal contexts.
Consolidating	Children use most features of the language appropriately in several contexts, and show an increasing degree of audience awareness. They try out different ways of listening and speaking for different purposes. Through use and practice, they consolidate their learning.

In this chapter, you have been introduced to a variety of perspectives about language learning, and you will see practices that are anchored in all of these perspectives in early childhood centres and classrooms throughout the world. Many practices reflect an 'eclectic' approach, which means that more than one theoretical perspective has been drawn upon.

## SUMMARY

There is no single fixed explanation for children's language acquisition, learning and development; rather, there are different theoretical perspectives, each of which places emphasis on either nature (biological factors) or nurture (environmental factors) or a combination of both in explaining how children acquire and develop language. Understanding the different theoretical perspectives is important, as each makes a significant contribution to knowing how teachers can support children in developing oral language. It is also important to be familiar with language development phases that signify children's progress along the path to oral language competency.

## QUESTIONS AND ACTIVITIES

- 1 Consider how each of the theoretical perspectives outlined have influenced educators' thinking about language development.
- 2 Develop a chart that outlines the strengths and limitations of each of the theoretical perspectives of language development.
- 3 Discuss the notion of 'ages and phases' or developmental milestones in the area of language development and determine its benefits and limitations.
- 4 With reference to language theories, consider what is meant by the nature–nurture debate.
- 5 Brainstorm ideas for the use of the information about children's phases of language development to assist with the design of experiences for children.
- 6 List factors that influence language development and suggest how you might cater for each in the nurturing of children's language development.

## KEY TERMS

classical conditioning  
 language acquisition device  
 language acquisition support system  
 operant conditioning  
 readiness  
 scaffolding  
 universal grammar

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