

Contents

Preface xi

Acknowledgements xiii

- 1. Language and the Environment: Some Evidence from Chomsky, Children and Chimpanzees 1**
- A Historical Perspective: The Chomsky–Skinner Debate 2
 - Language and Operant Conditioning 3
 - The Nativist Response 5
 - The Analogy with Physical Growth 6
 - Lexical and Syntactic Development 7
 - The Symbolic Capacities of Chimpanzees 8
 - A Comparison of Child and Chimpanzee 10
 - Language as a Distinctive Human Ability 11
 - Language and Experience: An Interactionist View 13

- 2. Language Development and Adult Speech 15**
- Early Studies of Adult Speech to Children 15
- The Degeneracy of the Stimulus 15
- The Emergence of Motherese 17
- Later Studies of Adult Speech to Children 18
- The Motherese Hypothesis 18
- Reinterpreting the Motherese Hypothesis 21
- The Bristol Longitudinal Study of Language
 Development 23
- The Emergence of a Consensus 26
- 3. The Social Context of Early Language Experience 29**
- The Social Abilities of Infants 30
- A Functional-Interactional Account of Early Language
Development 33
- Bruner's Theory 35
- The Non-verbal Context of Early Language Experience 39
- 4. From Input to Uptake: Traversing a Methodological
Minefield 41**
- What Kind of Evidence? 41
- From Input to Uptake 44
- Obtaining Appropriate Evidence 45
- 5. What Adults Say to Children 49**
- Study 1: The Non-verbal Context of Speech to
Young Children 49
- Analysis of the Interaction 49
- Results 53
- Maternal Speech and Children's Language
 Development 58
- Study 2: The Non-verbal Context of Maternal Speech and Rate
of Language Development 60
- Language Assessment at 2 Years 60
- Analysis of the Interaction 61
- Results 63
- Individual Differences in Maternal Style 64

- 6. Language Experience and Vocabulary Development 67**
- Vocabulary Development 69
- Phase One 69
- Phase Two 72
- Phase Three 73
- Early Vocabulary Development and Maternal Speech 74
- 7. The Establishment and Development of Word Meaning 77**
- Study 3: Relationships between Maternal Speech and Children's First Words 77
- Data Collection 77
- Analysis of Word Use 78
- Results 80
- Validity of the Sampling Procedure 87
- The Changing Relationship between Maternal Word Use and Children's Word Use 88
- Establishing Production 89
- Extending the Use of Words 91
- Conclusions 92
- 8. Early Language Development in Deaf Children 95**
- Language Development in Deaf Children 96
- Variation in Language Development 96
- Learning Sign Language 97
- Study 4: The Social Context of Early Sign Language Development 99
- Data Collection 99
- Analysis of the Interaction 100
- Results 100
- Language Experience and Early Sign Language Development 109
- 9. Language Experience and Early Language Development 113**
- Language Development in Blind Children 113
- Early Social Development 113
- Vocabulary Development 114

Early Syntactic Development	116
The Role of Experience in Language Development	116
What Language Experience Does	116
Is Early Experience Universal?	119
What Language Experience Does Not Do	123
What About Innate Constraints?	125
Are there Innate Constraints on Development	125
Language Experience and Innate Constraints	128
Why Children are Smarter than Chimpanzees	129

References 131

Author Index 139

Subject Index 143