

Earliest comprehension of grammar

- All of this so far has been on production
- But earliest stages of learning are likely to be comprehension

Pause-insertion studies

- Identification of clauses at 7 months
 - Hirsh-Pasek, Kemler Nelson, Jusczyk, Wright & Druss (1987)

Coincident version:

Cinderella lived in a great big house / but it was sort of dark / because she had this mean, mean, mean stepmother. / And, oh, she had two stepsisters / that were so ugly. / They were mean too.

Interrupted version:

... in a great big house but it was / sort of dark because she had / this mean, mean, mean stepmother. And, oh, she / had two stepsisters that were so / ugly. They were mean / too....

Pause-insertion studies

- Preference for whole phrases at 9 months
 - Jusczyk, Hirsh-Pasek, Kemler Nelson, Kennedy, Woodward & Pivov (1992)

Coincident version:

The little boy at the piano / is having a birthday party. All of his friends / like to sing. The happy little boy / loves to play music for his friends. The little boy's parents / gave him the piano for his birthday. The boy and his friends / are having a good time.

Interrupted version:

The little boy at the piano is having / a birthday party. All of his friends like / to sing. The happy little boy loves / to play music for his friends. The little boy's parents gave / him the piano for his birthday. The boy and his friends are having / a good time.

Pause-insertion studies

- Preference for words at 11 months
 - Myers, Jusczyk, Kemler Nelson, Charles-Luce, Woodward & Hirsh-Pasek (1996)

Coincident version:

Some very / big animals live at the zoo. These very / big animals are elephants. (Oh boy!) The smaller baby / elephant is walking with her mother. Both / the mother and the / baby have long trunks instead of noses. The baby / elephant / and her mother are looking for food. Plants, grain and / peanuts are good / food for elephants.

Interrupted version:

Some very big ani / mals live at the zoo. These very big animals are ele / phants. (Oh boy!) The smaller baby ele / phant is walking with her mother. Both the mo / ther and the baby have long trunks in /stead of noses. The baby ele / phant and her mo / ther are looking for food. Plants, grain and pea / nuts are good food for ele / phants.

Relationships among words

- Word locations at 16 months
 - Shady (1996)

Is bike with three wheels a coming down the street. Johnny that seen had bike yesterday. Was lady with him the his aunt. Was red bike this missing for a day. Had cover that fallen on it. We the found had bike next to her garage.

There was once a little kitten who was born in a dark cozy closet. She knew how the light looked when it came through the open door. But one day, she became curious about the light that came through the open door. She wondered, where is that light coming from? And what is else is on the other side of that door?

Relationships among words

- Word locations at 16 months
 - Shady (1996)

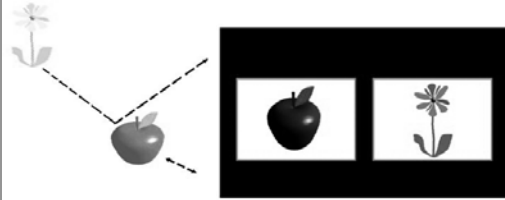
Is bike with three wheels a coming down the street. Johnny that seen had bike yesterday. Was lady with him the his aunt. Was red bike this missing for a day. Had cover that fallen on it. We the found had bike next to her garage.

There [hai] once [I] little kitten who [hai] born in [I] dark cozy closet. She knew how [gI] light looked when it came through [gI] open door. But one day, she became curious about [gI] light [gEk] came through [gI] open door. She wondered, where [Ej] [gEk] light coming from? And what is else [Ej] on [gI] other side [æf] [gEk] door?

Relationships among words

- Dependencies among words at 18 months
 - “He is digging”
 - “He can dig”
 - *but not* “He can digging”
- But this depends on memory load
 - “He is digging”
 - “He is always digging”
 - “He is almost always digging”
 - Santelmann & Jusczyk, 1998

Understanding wh-questions



Seidl, Hollich & Jusczyk, 2003

Naigles, 1990

