



# Signal to Syntax: Bootstrapping From Speech To Grammar in Early Acquisition

From Psychology Press

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## Signal to Syntax: Bootstrapping From Speech To Grammar in Early Acquisition From Psychology Press

In the beginning, before there are words, or syntax, or discourse, there is speech. Speech is an infant's gateway to language. Without exposure to speech, no language--or at most only a feeble facsimile of language--develops, regardless of how rich a child's biological endowment for language learning may be. But little is given directly in speech--not words, for example, as anyone who has ever listened to fluent conversation in an unfamiliar language can attest. Rather, words and phrases, or rudimentary categories--or whatever other information is required for syntactic and semantic analyses to begin operating--must be pulled from speech through an infant's developing perceptual capacities. By the end of the first year, an infant can segment at least some words from fluent speech. Beyond this, how impoverished or rich an infant's representations of input may be remains largely unknown. Clearly, in the debate over determinants of early language acquisition, the input speech stream has too often been offhandedly dismissed as a potential source of information.

This volume brings together internationally-known scholars from a range of disciplines--linguistics, psychology, cognitive and computer science, and acoustics --who share common interests in how speech, in its phonological, prosodic, distributional, and statistical properties, may encode information useful for early language learning, and how such information may be deciphered by very young children. These scholars offer a spectrum of viewpoints on the possibility that aspects of speech may provide bootstraps for language learning; contribute important, state-of-the-art findings across a variety of relevant domains; and illuminate critical directions for future inquiry. The publication of this volume represents a significant step in renewing the bonds between two fields that have long been sundered--speech perception and language acquisition.

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### **Review**

*Signal to Syntax* makes an important contribution by summarizing a growing body of work, emerging from a variety of disciplines, which documents the feasibility of the phonological bootstrapping hypothesis.

—***Contemporary Psychology***

*...the editors have done us a service in stimulating and producing this theoretically well delimited yet diverse volume. The rich range of empirical and linguistic analyses here, may be expected to influence the language acquisition literature for many years to come.*

—***Child Language***

*...a most important theoretical contribution to child language study. It presents a coherent and comprehensive series of chapters that all takes as their starting point an attempt to unravel how the adult speech that is addressed to young children might lead to their acquisition of the first language.*

—***TESL-EJ***

*...this is clearly an impressive collection that deals with one of the greatest linguistic puzzles of our time. Given the status of the syntax/LF and syntax/PF interfaces in recent minimalist syntax, it seems unlikely that questions related to the integration of semantic and phonological cues to syntactic structure will lessen in import. The editors deserve congratulations for producing such a fine work.*

—***Journal of Linguistics***

*...the volume is well-organized and clearly written. This publication is essential reading not only for those interested in phonological development but also for psycholinguistics who investigate the acquisition of morphosyntax.*

—***The Phonetician***

*A very useful volume, relatively well integrated for this type of collective work, tapping a problem that has become increasingly central in the last years.*

—***Anuario De Psicología***

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#### **Mary McKay:**

Reading a guide tends to be new life style on this era globalization. With reading through you can get a lot of information that may give you benefit in your life. Together with book everyone in this world may share their idea. Books can also inspire a lot of people. A great deal of author can inspire their own reader with their story or their experience. Not only the story that share in the textbooks. But also they write about the knowledge about something that you need case in point. How to get the good score toefl, or how to teach your sons or daughters, there are many kinds of book that you can get now. The authors in this world always try to improve their skill in writing, they also doing some analysis before they write to the book. One of them

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