２０２２年度

大学院文学研究科博士課程後期３年の課程入学試験

（　春期・一般選抜　）問題

筆記試験　　言語学　　専攻分野

試験開始の合図があるまで、この問題冊子を開いてはいけない。

受験記号番号	

成 績	

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問題 I. 次の文章を読んで下の問いに答えなさい。

I will now briefly step aside from theoretical issues to sample another important branch of language study: child language research. Like work on animal communication, the literature on child language acquisition provides rich fodder for scientists interested in innate aspects of meaning (Brown, 1973; Bloom, 2000; Gleason, 2005; Peccei, 2006). In particular, studies of children's acquisition of word meanings provide strong arguments for innate constraints on human conceptual abilities. Perhaps surprisingly, there appears to be little disagreement as to *whether* some pre-existing constrains on word meaning exist (e.g. Clark, 1987; Markman, 1990; Gleason, 2005). Both theoretical arguments and abundant empirical data make the acceptance of constraints on word meaning seem almost inevitable, although the precise nature and number of constraints remains a topic of productive debate. A readable and incisive introduction to this literature is Bloom (2000). Furthermore, comparative work on *animal* word learning allows investigation of the similarities and differences between humans and animals in this domain.

Word meanings must be learned. (a)The connection between their acoustic morphology and their reference is, with few exceptions, highly arbitrary. A child encountering a word for the first time thus has the dual task of memorizing its structure *and* guessing its referential significance. The latter task, despite the apparent ease with which children carry it out, is anything but trivial, and has generated a huge literature on child language acquisition. The theoretical problem was cast in sharp relief by Quine (1960), with his famous (b)"Gavagai" parable. Imagine you are an anthropologist newly arrived among a group of monolingual hunter-gatherers, and in the course of the day's wanderings a rabbit hops by and the natives exclaim *Gavagai!* The normal referential interpretation of this utterance would be something like RABBIT, and we would expect any normal child (or anthropologist) to assume as much. Obviously, however, *Gavagai* could mean 'meat' or 'animal' or 'hopping' or 'long ears' or 'how cute' or 'Haven't seen one of those in a while!' or various other possibilities, and we wouldn't be terribly surprised if one of these alternatives turned out to be the correct meaning, as we master the language. But even these alternatives entail certain assumptions. Quine asked us to consider such assumptions more closely (imagine, if you like, that the anthropologist is from Mars, and has very different conceptual structures from our own). From a logical point of view, there is no reason that *Gavagai* couldn't have far stranger referents, like 'fuzzy + long legs' or 'intersection between rabbits and grass of a certain height' or 'undetached rabbit parts.' Indeed, there is an indefinite number of *logically* possible meanings for a word, uttered in a given context. While hearing the word repeated in various different contexts may help, it will not solve this logical "problem of induction" (Goodman, 1983): our ability to form correct generalizations in the face of an infinity of logically consistent options.

Quine's Gavagai problem is a theoretical problem, the kind it takes a philosopher to discover. But children and anthropologists muddle by perfectly well in spite of it, and a rich empirical literature on "fast mapping" (Carey, 1978; Markson and Bloom, 1997) shows that children can often correctly guess, and remember, the intended meaning of words after a singe hearing. The child obviously does not unconsciously process all of Quine's various logical possibilities. Rather, the hypothesis space appears **constrained** in certain ways, and the child simply fails to consider many of these possible meanings. These constraints should develop early and reliably if they are to solve the

problem (if constraints were learned based on external input, all the same logical problems would apply). This capacity to successfully extract word meanings from a given context is not limited to humans: animals are also capable of linking meanings to arbitrary sounds in human-like ways, suggesting that such constraints have a long evolutionary history.

While this argument has precisely the same form as the poverty of the stimulus argument (Crain, 1991) which has proved so controversial when applied to syntax, this conclusion is not particularly controversial in child language acquisition. Since Macnamara (1972), virtually all contemporary researchers take for granted that Quine's "Gavagai" problem is a real one, and that its solution entails some form of innate constraints on the child's attempts to map words onto meanings. However, students of child language acquisition remain divided over the degree to which such constraints are specific to word learning or to language. For example, Paul Bloom accepts the need for innate constraints but rejects the hypothesis that these constraints are specific to word learning (Bloom, 2000), and supports this suggestion with the fact that similar speed and accuracy are seen in children's nonlinguistic concept acquisition (Markson and Bloom, 1997). (c)Research on animals supports this argument, suggesting that many of these constraints are older than the human species, and at least some reflect ancient conceptual biases and constraints on what "counts" as an object or event.

(W. Tecumseh Fitch (2010). *The Evolution of Language*. Cambridge University Press. より一部改編して掲載)

(1) 下線部 (a) の with few exceptions は具体的にどのようなことを指すか、自分の知っている言語の具体例を挙げながら説明しなさい。

(2) 下線部 (b) の "Gavagai" parable とはどのような問題か、本文の記述に即してまとめ、それが第一言語獲得においてなぜ重要かを説明しなさい。

(3) 下線部 (c) を日本語に訳しなさい。

問題 II. 自分の関心ある言語事象について概説し、それを研究する意義、目的、方法、予測される結果を具体的に述べなさい。その研究の特徴を、一般言語学および関連領域の文脈の中に位置づけながら説明しなさい。

問題 I と II の回答は、次ページ以降にまとめて記すこと。

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