

Two radical positions on language development: naive **nativist** and naive **empiricist** .

What is wrong with each of these?

Wolf children and critical periods

An empiricist model of language: Skinner's: Verbal Behavior

the counter argument: Chomsky, N. (1959). A review of Skinner's *Verbal Behavior*. Language, 35, 26-58.

See Pinker, S. (1994). The Language Instinct. New York: William Morrow and Co.

What is wrong with a behaviorist theory of language acquisition?

PROBLEM 1: It overgeneralized the idea of stimulus control

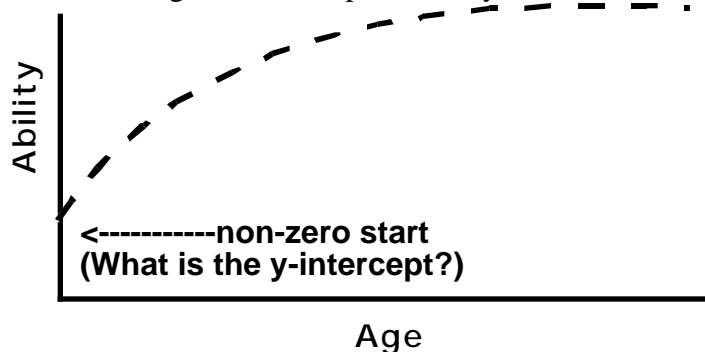
Skinner Example: You see a painting. You say "Rembrandt".

PROBLEM 2: It overgeneralized the idea of reinforcement

PROBLEM 3: The contingencies of reinforcement are not correct.

Language as an example of "preparedness"

What does cognitive development study?



Animal language

Animals can communicate

They have **SIGNALS**

distinguish between natural animal language and trained animal language.

Animal signals have **MEANING**

Do chimps have morphemes or words?

Do animals have syntax?

Is animal language productive (or generative).

Why does this matter?