



# UNIVERSIDAD DE QUINTANA ROO

División de Ciencias Políticas y Humanidades

English-Spanish Translation of the text:  
*'The nature and scope of later language development'* with a detailed analysis of the techniques used by the translator.

TRABAJO MONOGRÁFICO  
Para obtener el grado de  
*LICENCIADO EN LENGUA INGLESA*

PRESENTA

Rigoberto Ysquierdo Rodríguez

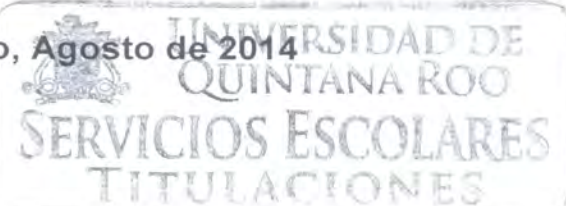
SUPERVISORES

M.C. Alessio Zanier Visintin

Dra. Edith Hernández Méndez

M.C. Sonia Teresita Sansores Valencia

Chetumal, Quintana Roo, Agosto de 2014



# UNIVERSIDAD DE QUINTANA ROO

---

División de Ciencias Políticas y Humanidades



Trabajo Monográfico elaborado bajo la supervisión del comité de asesoría y aprobado como requisito para obtener el grado de:

## LICENCIADO EN LENGUA INGLESA

### COMITÉ DE SUPERVISIÓN

Supervisor: \_\_\_\_\_

M.C. Alessio Zanier Visintin

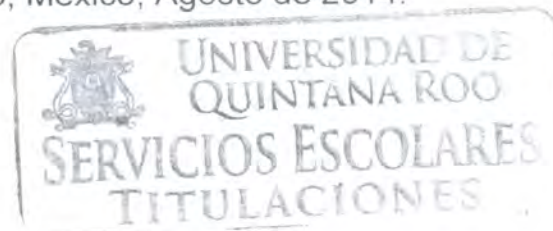
Supervisor: \_\_\_\_\_

Dra. Edith Hernández Méndez

Supervisor: \_\_\_\_\_

M.C. Sonia Teresita Sansores Valencia

Chetumal, Quintana Roo, México, Agosto de 2014.



# INDEX

<b>Index.....</b>	<b>3</b>
<b>Acknowledgements.....</b>	<b>4</b>
<b>Introduction.....</b>	<b>5</b>
<b>Justification.....</b>	<b>7</b>
<b>Objectives.....</b>	<b>9</b>
<b>Literature Review.....</b>	<b>10</b>
<b>Methodology.....</b>	<b>16</b>
<b>Translation.....</b>	<b>20</b>
<b>Analysis.....</b>	<b>36</b>
<b>Conclusions.....</b>	<b>46</b>
<b>References.....</b>	<b>48</b>
<b>Appendix: Source Text.....</b>	<b>51</b>

## ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

**To my god:** for giving me life all this time because without life we are nothing.

Thanks for giving me strength in tough times.

**To my parents:** I am so grateful to my father, Bartolo and my mother, Maria for supporting and encouraging me in this life. Thanks to you I accomplished one of my most important goals and you know well that these words can't express all I feel for you. God bless both of you every day!

**To my family:** for being there in good and bad moments, especially to my sister Nuri who has a kind heart.

**To my supervisors M.C. Alessio Zanier Visintin, Dra. Edith Hernández Méndez, and M.C. Sonia Teresita Sansores Valencia:** for all the time invested in me and because without your advice, knowledge and help I couldn't have achieved this.

**To my friends:** for all the fun I had with you and for the nicest moments I spent in these five years in the major. You are always going to be part of my life! I want to especially thank Ale for being more than my friend; she knows she is my soul sister!

## INTRODUCTION

Humanity has always thought of a way of being in communication. Cultures have shared their vast knowledge with other cultures around the world. The way they did it is admirable since language was not a hindrance. In this way, we can see that there has always been messages transmitted from culture to culture. Since ancient times, translation has played a crucial role in several fields such as politics, religion, and education, among others.

Consequently, the importance of translation has increased as an academic discipline. The aim of translation is transmitting an idea or message from one language to another. However, transmitting a message or idea seems not to be everything since when translating it is necessary to consider aspects such as culture and linguistics.

According to Newmark (1988, p. 10). *“Translation is now used as much to transmit knowledge and to create understanding between groups and nations, as to transmit culture.”*

Bassnett (2002, p. 17) writes in her book that *‘Translation studies, therefore, is exploring new ground, bridging as it does the gap between the vast area of stylistic, literary history, semiotics and aesthetics.’*

In the translation field, a translator is required to convey a message from one language to another capturing the main idea; he/she must be able to create a good balance of understanding among the two languages giving a clear message.

This monographic study is the translation of an article that is about the different approaches and processes involved in the language development of five-year-old children. It explains the changes in the kind of words used by children, how the sentences constituents are expanded, the word links they begin using in sentences and the different strategies that they use to interact with other people.

This work is an English-Spanish translation of the chapter '*The nature and scope of later language development*' written in 2004 by Liliana Tolchinsky, which is a chapter of the book *Language Development across Childhood and Adolescence*, published in 2004. This text is classified as scientific and its main purpose is to explain some of the most important processes occurred in language development.

In order to carry out this work, the translator applied different translation techniques to create a useful text for Spanish language speakers who are interested in the topic and who need a guide to do future translations.

## JUSTIFICATION

We live in a globalized world where many cultures, races and of course languages exist. We, as human beings, must seek new ways to be well-informed and up-to-date about current events, including those that are providing knowledge. Nowadays, science is progressing so considerably that new research and findings are just amazing, although all this information is not only available in one language. Consequently, translators are requested to do this job in order to inform the users of what has been found out.

That is why translation plays an important role in the communication between different nations in the world since one of its main goals is to enable people to share knowledge.

This translation was required by Professor Edith Hernández Méndez who is interested in having this text in the basic bibliography of her classes in the Spanish Master's program, since students in the program have problems reading in English. I believe that this topic is relevant and interesting and this article has not been translated before. Thus, Spanish speaking people will be able to use the information.

Additionally, people who are interested in doing research about this topic will be also benefited by having this text translated into Spanish. Therefore, the importance of this translation is that the information will be used for those who wish to better understand some of the processes which occur in language development.

Furthermore, this translation could be helpful for those students who come from other schools at the library to search information that only appears in English. So, this Spanish version will provide the necessary information. In the same way, this translation could be used for future reference by all those students who want to be translators or want to conduct a study on this kind of topic, and they will be benefited by using this work as a guidebook.



## OBJECTIVES

We can find many theories in the translation field that are used to translate different kinds of texts but in this case the work of the translator is to analyze and review which theories are the best in order to apply them. It is very important to know the use of these theories; thereby the translator will know how to translate words or phrases that can become a hurdle. Besides, the translation will be carried out efficiently if the translator supports the information translated with the relevant theories.

Therefore, the main objectives of this monographic work are:

- To use and apply the different strategies and translation techniques in keeping with the text.
- To help all the students and people who do not have a sufficient knowledge of English to understand the English version.
- To carry out a useful translation of the original article into Spanish.
- To give suggestions for future translations about this kind of topic.

## LITERATURE REVIEW

A translator must be aware of the unexpected problems during the translation process. That is why he/she should take into consideration the translation techniques which are a powerful tool to carry out an excellent work. Hence, in the development of this work nine translation techniques were applied during the procedure although this depended on the requirements of the original text.

In the translation field, we can find three important and well-known schools which differ in their classification of translation techniques.

Fawcett (1997) states these schools as the following:

The most famous one is the Canadian school, headed by Jean-Paul Vinay and Jean Darbelnet, which came to the fore in 1958. They proposed seven translation techniques divided in two methods of translating: the direct or literal translation (borrowing, calque, literal) and the oblique translation (transposition, modulation, equivalence, adaptation).

The Russian school of translation of Jacob Retsker and Solange Schweitser. This theory proposed divides translation in two groups: translation as analogy and translation as adequacy. The first one covers the situation of one-to-many correspondences between languages and the second one covers cases where there is no one-to-one equivalence and no readily definable contextual

correspondence in the form of collocation. It is good to mention that Retsker actually stated seven techniques. The others are concretization, logical derivation, anatomic translation and compensation.

The American school of translation, represented by J. L. Malone. He listed the following procedures which are described by two or three terms; Matching, which covers two specific processes called Equation and Substitution, Zigzagging, which uses the generic term for divergence and convergence, Recrescence, which is the generic term for amplification and reduction, Repacking, which uses the generic term for diffusion and condensation, and finally Reordering.

The theorists of these three schools share similarities. The theories of translation are of great importance for translators because they will assist them to achieve the goal in their work. The Canadian school is the most prestigious because of the kind of translation techniques. They are easy to use and give the translator the freedom of using any of them.

This monographic study is based on the translation techniques proposed by the Canadian school (Vinay and Darbelnet). The following information is based on an explanation about each procedure; thus, there are examples which display each technique.

**Direct Translation:**

**Borrowing:** Words that are taken from a language to another one without changing their base form. This procedure is used when in the target language the term does not exist. Although this technique is simple, sometimes it can imply aspects as cultural meaning, pronunciation, etc.

Examples: *Tortillas, tequila, closet, software*

**Calque:** Venuti (2000, p. 85) defines calque as *'a kind of borrowing where a language borrows a word or an expression from another language and translates literally each of its elements'*. This technique is very useful because it helps to eradicate the foreign words, and so the translation will sound more natural. There are some kinds of calque according to the word used: expression calque, structural calque, lexical or false calque, orthographic calque and typographic calque.

Example: Skyscrapers.....*Rascacielos*

**Literal Translation:** Fawcett, (1997, p. 36) provides this definition: *'This is the rare case but always welcome case when a text can go from one language into another with no changes other than those required by the target language grammar.'* In this procedure, the translation is made translating word by word without changing the linguistic components of the source language.

Example: The house is green.....*La casa es verde.*

### **Oblique Translation**

**Transposition:** According to Zanier (2011, p. 7), '*transposition is the modification of the grammatical category of a part of the sentence without semantic variations.*'

The translator can modify some parts of the text without changing the sense of the message.

Example: After she left, the house remained empty.....*Después de su partida la casa quedó vacía.*

**Modulation:** '*A variation of the form of the message, obtained by a change in the point of view.*' (Venuti, 2000, p.89). This method allows the use of a structure different from the original one. The modulation technique includes the metonymic and synecdoctical ones, the opposing terms, the double negation turned into an affirmative, the passive to active forms, the change of symbols and the change from a common to a more refined form.

Example: She read the book from cover to cover.....*Leyó el libro de principio a fin.*

**Equivalence:** '*Cases where languages describe the same situation by different stylistics or structural means.*' (Munday, 2001, p. 58). This technique can be used when dealing with idioms, proverbs, slangs, onomatopoeia and clichés. According

to Nida and Taber (1982), there are two different types of equivalents: formal equivalence or correspondence and dynamic equivalence.

Example: Time and tide wait for no man.....*Camarón que se duerme, se lo lleva la corriente.*

**Adaptation:** *'This involves changing the cultural referent when a situation in the source culture does not exist in the target culture.'* (Munday, 2001, p. 58). It occurs when there are not common equivalent expressions in the target language.

Example: The Pearly Gates.....*Las puertas del paraíso.*

Clash of the Titans (film).....*Furia de titanes.*

**Expansion or amplification:** This consists of the use of more words when it is necessary in the target language. This technique is often used when translating texts into Spanish.

Example: His answer was characteristically frank.....*Respondió con la franqueza que lo caracteriza.*

**Reduction:** It is the omission of words which are not required in the target language. This procedure is less frequent when translating from English into Spanish.

Example: to come up with.....*plantear/idear*

The translation techniques explained above are really helpful for the translation because they facilitate answers and solutions to the future problems. This monographic study applied these procedures in order to prove their veracity. I considered these methods necessary for the translation of the chapter because it contains many complex terms to translate.

## METHODOLOGY

First of all, the text to be translated is *'The nature and scope of later development language'* written in 2004 by Liliana Tolchinsky. The nature of this article is scientific and it will be used for students who are pursuing a master's degree in Spanish. The fifteen-page text gives a full description of the different approaches to explaining later language development; these are: cognitive underpinning, experience with language *per se*, and the effect of genre and literacy. The translation was requested by Professor Edith Hernández Méndez who is member of the faculty in the Spanish Master's Program.

According to Robinson (2003, p. 3). *'Translators need to be able to recognize problems areas and to slow down to solve them in a complex analytical way'*. For this reason, it is necessary to read the text first so that the translator can look for the terms that do not seem familiar. Besides, he/she has to consider instruments for solving these unexpected problems.

Therefore, once I was asked to do the translation of this text, I had to read it in order to have a general overview of its content, so I could come across some difficult words and phrases that could probably cause problem when translating the text. I had to underline them in order to have an idea about what I was dealing with. It is important to mention that I searched the text in Spanish on the internet and other sources of information to be sure that it had not been translated before.



Secondly, the importance of using accurate instruments to carry out any kind of translation is extremely vital and essential since they provide a reliable translation. Thus, I used different tools that were fundamental during the process. The following information consists of a brief explanation of each tool considered for the translation:

- **Dictionaries online and printed:** One of the most important tools for the translator; they are very useful sources of information. They can be synonymous-antonymous, English-Spanish, Spanish-English, monolingual (Spanish or English), linguistic dictionaries and even encyclopaedias. For instance: Collins, Oxford, Larousse, and Cambridge dictionaries.
- **Books:** They supply the translator with a wide range of knowledge about the topic and provide important information to understand the context and content of the text. In this case, the books used were related to the linguistics field. For instance, *The Development of Language* by Gleason, Jean, *Principles of Language Learning and Teaching* by Brown, D, *How Children Learn* by Bransford J. D., *The Study of Language* by Yule, G.
- **Computer:** Undoubtedly, this instrument has to be considered by translators because it can be used for storing, organizing, typing and finding the information required. This machine has made the work easier since the translator is free to modify the information the necessary number of times.

- **Articles:** Researches previously done related to the topic were also considered in order to have a more precise translation. They may furnish the translator a better understanding of the translation. The information of articles might help the translator to get familiarized with the complex terms.
- **Linguistic corpora:** *'A large collection of written, and sometimes spoken, examples of the use of a language, employed in linguistic analysis.'* (Encarta, M. 2008). This tool is efficient when looking for words that have a different function according to the context.

Some corpuses that were consulted are: The Collins Wordbanks Online English Corpus, The British National Corpus (BNC), The Michigan Corpus of Academic Spoken English and The Corpus of Contemporary American English (COCA). These are complete and widely used corpora.

- **Experts:** Teachers who have a vast knowledge in the linguistics field and who are familiar with this kind of topic were consulted as well. They could give some advice and recommendations for doing an excellent translation.
- **Glossaries:** This kind of tool has been taken into account because sometimes they provide a good option to translate words that have a specific and scientific meaning.

For the translation analysis section, I decided to apply the translation techniques of the famous Canadian school headed by Jean-Paul Vinay and Jean Darbelnat. The analysis consists of a brief explanation and description of each technique and some examples presented during the translation process; possible problems were discussed and likewise their possible solutions. In addition, there is a sentence or a phrase taken from the original text followed by the translation; the main goal was to compare the different ways and approaches for translating the troublesome phrases and sentences. Translation methods are divided according to their group which can be **direct**, covering borrowing, calque and literal translation and **oblique**, including transposition, modulation, equivalence and adaptation techniques.

Finally, the translation project was supervised by three professors; one of them is expert in the area of translation and the others two are experts in the field of linguistics and the English language. Their guidance in this monographic study was of the utmost importance and, more importantly, errors were avoided since their opinions clarified the uncertain points. At the end, conclusions were given.

# La naturaleza y el alcance del desarrollo tardío del lenguaje\*

Liliana Tolchinsky

## 1. Introducción y panorama general

Pocos cambios en el desarrollo de los individuos son tan notables como la aparición del lenguaje. No es de extrañar entonces que las primeras etapas de la adquisición del lenguaje – el surgimiento de las primeras palabras y primeras combinaciones de palabras- hayan sido de interés principal para investigadores de la lengua. Dicho interés aumentó considerablemente tras la propuesta de Chomsky sobre la naturaleza innata de la adquisición del lenguaje. Aunque la afirmación central de Chomsky -el aprendizaje del lenguaje es posible por la existencia de una gramática Universal innata- no sea una declaración empírica sino un requisito lógico, ésta condujo a psicolingüistas a diseñar pruebas empíricas de dicha afirmación. La mayor parte de tal investigación psicolingüística se centra en la velocidad con la que los niños adquieren el idioma (ej., McNeil 1970), la cantidad de conocimiento innato que poseen, y la similitud de su gramática con la de los adultos (ej., Crain & Lillo-Martin 1999). Irónicamente, fue Carol Chomsky quien, a finales de los años sesenta, sugirió que la gramática de los niños puede diferir en algunos aspectos de la de los adultos, incluso después de los cinco años de edad. Esta idea dio origen al campo ‘adquisición del lenguaje tardío’; el cual se basa en el estudio sobre lo que ocurre en el lenguaje de los niños después de los cinco años y que se define como ‘una edad fronterá’ (1986b:455 Karmiloff-Smith).

Después de los cinco años, los niños crean oraciones más largas, adquieren un repertorio más amplio de construcciones sintácticas y son cada vez más capaces de comprender y producir construcciones que antes eran desconocidas para ellos. Sin embargo, sería erróneo considerar la edad de cinco años como un límite entre el uso de estructuras básicas y estructuras complejas. Lo que ha desconcertado a los investigadores es la ‘adquisición prolongada junto a las similitudes formales’ (Johnston 1985); refiriéndose al hecho de que estructuras de complejidad similar, pero con diferentes funciones a veces se adquieren durante un periodo de varios años.

También hay cambios cualitativos en los tipos de palabras que los niños emplean, la forma en que expanden los constituyentes de la oración, los vínculos que establecen entre las oraciones y las estrategias que utilizan para interactuar con sus interlocutores. Sus actos comunicativos se realizan en nuevos medios de expresión. El desarrollo del lenguaje no consiste en acumular nuevas formas lingüísticas; sino más bien, las formas adquiridas previamente evolucionan para

adquirir nuevas funciones y por el contrario, las funciones adquiridas inicialmente se expresan de algún modo a través de una creciente diversidad de formas lingüísticas (Berman & Slobin 1994; Slobin 1973). Ésta es una de las ideas más poderosas en el estudio del desarrollo tardío del lenguaje.

Se han propuesto numerosas explicaciones sobre los cambios del desarrollo en la relación de las formas y las funciones. Algunos estudiosos han sugerido que estos cambios tienen un fundamento cognitivo. Investigadores de varias escuelas del pensamiento - incluyendo aquellas que sostienen que el desarrollo del lenguaje está guiado por un dispositivo de adquisición del lenguaje independiente, el cual restringe la hipótesis de que los niños aprendices crean la estructura del lenguaje (Chomsky 1981) - sugieren que tal módulo del lenguaje puede interactuar con otros sistemas cognitivos. Esta interacción podría conllevar restricciones estructurales generales al aprendizaje o podría reflejar los límites que el conocimiento disponible de los niños puede establecer en su habilidad para descubrir patrones lingüísticos (Johnston 1985; Piatelli-Palmarini 1980; Slobin, 1985).

Otros estudiosos explican los cambios observados debido al aumento de la experiencia de los niños con el lenguaje *per se* (1979 Karmiloff-Smith, 1992; López-Ornat 1999). Desde esta perspectiva, el progreso se observa como un cambio de dominio de actuación lingüística de 'contextualizado' a 'descontextualizado', es decir, a medida que la capacidad de los niños crece para reflexionar sobre el idioma, llegan a depender cada vez menos de los contextos extralingüísticos para entender las expresiones lingüísticas, aprenden a considerar tales expresiones en sí mismas y son cada vez más capaces de usar el lenguaje como herramienta para entender el mismo lenguaje. Los niños también se dan cuenta de que una sola expresión lingüística puede tener múltiples funciones, y por el contrario, que una sola función puede representarse por varias expresiones diferentes. Todos estos son aspectos de un proceso de 'descontextualización', no en el sentido de que la lengua llega a ser disociada de los contextos de su uso, sino más bien que la capacidad de separar la lengua del contexto hace posible un entendimiento más profundo de ambos, haciendo su relación más flexible y dinámica.

Una tercera postura sostiene que el motor fundamental del cambio es el discurso, que afecta la organización interna de las oraciones y el significado de los elementos oracionales. No significa que la estructura discursiva emerge solamente después de los cinco años, sino que los vínculos establecidos por los niños entre los componentes del discurso cambian, dando lugar a una reorganización de todos los sistemas lingüísticos. 'El discurso proporciona a los niños un mecanismo de desarrollo para la adquisición de dispositivos lingüísticos' (Hickmann 2003:335). El discurso no surge de la nada, sino dentro de las limitaciones específicas de género y modalidad. Así como el burgués de Molière, nosotros podemos hablar

prosa, poesía, narración o cualquier género discursivo que las circunstancias requieran. No hay nada como el uso neutral del lenguaje: la gente constantemente adapta su discurso con intenciones específicas, propósitos e interlocutores. De esta manera, el desarrollo es visto en términos de la adquisición de diferentes géneros discursivos y la forma en que las convenciones culturales de géneros restringen el uso de las formas lingüísticas.

Finalmente, las teorías del desarrollo tardío del lenguaje están influenciadas por la idea de un fuerte vínculo con la alfabetización académica. Desde esta perspectiva, la alfabetización académica conlleva numerosos desarrollos. Entre ellos, el aumento y la diversificación del léxico; la asignación de nuevas funciones a las formas previamente asociadas con una sola función; el establecimiento de relaciones inter-oracionales; y la comprensión de los usos no literales del lenguaje como la metáfora y la ironía, entre otros (Fletcher & Garman 1986; Lee et al., 2001; Olson, 1996).

El objetivo de este último capítulo es mostrar que estos diferentes enfoques que explican el desarrollo tardío del lenguaje, los cuales enfatizan el fundamento cognitivo, la experiencia con el lenguaje per se, los efectos del género y la alfabetización académica, están interrelacionados y sus resultados pueden ser interpretados de una forma unificada. Sugiero que el desarrollo tardío del lenguaje está orientado a dos necesidades aparentemente opuestas: *convergencia* y *divergencia*. Por *convergencia*, me refiero a la tendencia del uso del lenguaje que se adapta cada vez más a una variedad de circunstancias comunicativas; por *divergencia*, a la tendencia del uso del lenguaje a ser cada vez más individualizado y heterogéneo.

Un enunciado es convergente cuando toma en cuenta los enunciados anteriores y posteriores, el interlocutor y el contexto comunicativo en que se produce. Esto proporciona una opción aceptable no sólo en la gramática y el sentido sino también en relación con las circunstancias y las necesidades y expectativas del interlocutor.

La *divergencia* implica que a medida que los niños crecen, las discrepancias, más que las similitudes en el uso del lenguaje, se vuelven más evidentes. Esto se debe a que las características del lenguaje que se desarrollan con la edad son precisamente aquellas que son más sensibles a las experiencias sociales y culturales, tales como el léxico culto o las estructuras sintácticas de baja frecuencia. Conforme los niños crecen, sus fuentes de input lingüístico se vuelven cada vez más variadas. Los niños pequeños experimentan el lenguaje principalmente de forma oral, mientras que los niños de edad escolar y los adolescentes están expuestos también al input escrito. Como se demuestra a través de los capítulos de este libro, el vocabulario se torna más especializado por las diferencias en la educación, y la especificidad semántica del léxico cambia drásticamente con la edad; los niños aprenden a distinguir registros lingüísticos

para hacer distinciones apropiadas entre el uso oral y escrito, y el uso más coloquial comparado con el uso cotidiano; mientras que la capacidad para reflexionar sobre la lengua aumenta fortaleciendo la sensibilidad infantil para la expresión figurativa.

Sugiero que el desarrollo de la convergencia y la divergencia implican dos factores: uno psicológico y otro cultural. El factor psicológico es la posesión de la 'teoría de la mente', la cual se refiere a la capacidad de entender y razonar acerca de las creencias de los demás (Perner 1991; Siegal & Varley 2002), mientras que el factor cultural se basa en la alfabetización – no sólo en el sentido limitado de aprender a leer y a escribir, sino en el sentido de participar en las actividades comunicativas de una comunidad educada (Ravid & Tolchinsky 2002).

## **2. Algunas características del desarrollo tardío del lenguaje**

Los niños han adquirido a la edad de cinco años la estructura de la oración de su lengua en consonancia con las restricciones tipológicas de la lengua de destino, lo que incluye la comprensión de cómo agrupar palabras dentro de las cláusulas, cómo moverlas dentro de una oración para crear preguntas y construcciones pasivas, y cómo combinar las cláusulas en oraciones complejas.

En lenguas con una rica morfología, los niños dominan a muy temprana edad las marcas flexivas de concordancia para categorías como número, género, y persona, y aprenden a aplicar los principios de productividad y convencionalidad en el campo de la derivación (Berman 2003a; Clark 1993; Clark & Berman 1984; Clark & Hecht 1982; Ravid, este volumen).

En el desarrollo léxico, los niños a la edad de cinco años muestran menos tendencia a sub- y sobre generalizar los significados de las palabras mientras simultáneamente son capaces de formar mejores representaciones semánticas de palabras en términos de sus elementos característicos o significados principales (Dockrell & Messer, este volumen; Keil & Batterman 1984); es decir, el niño logra comprender significados convencionales.

Con respecto a la conversación, los bebés ya desde los tres meses utilizan gestos comunicativos únicos de nuestra especie; la madre y el bebé comienzan a hablar mutuamente durante largos periodos antes de que el niño sea capaz de emitir una palabra. Los niños son buenos hablando por turnos, tanto con otros niños como con adultos; y cuando empiezan a producir sus primeras palabras, normalmente pueden sostener largos encuentros de conversaciones por turno (Kaye & Charney 1981; Nieve, 1997). A los tres años, los niños pueden producir y comprender todo tipo de saludos, prohibiciones, peticiones, solicitudes de atención compartida y promesas. Claramente poseen un repertorio completo de actos de habla (Blum-Kulka, este volumen; Ninio et al. 1994; Rollins et al. prensa).

Entonces, ¿qué aspectos del uso del lenguaje, desarrollan más tarde? Cuatro rasgos principales caracterizan el desarrollo tardío del lenguaje: la textura; el significado más allá de los sentidos convencionales; el diálogo más allá del intercambio; y la semántica de mundos alternativos.

## 2.1 Textura

El dominio de la textura lingüística de los niños crece con la edad en el sentido de que éstos son cada vez más capaces de establecer vínculos entre las expresiones lingüísticas (Ambas palabras *texto* y *textura* provienen de la misma palabra latina *textus* 'tejido'.) Por ejemplo, los niños aprenden a usar pronombres anafóricos y a emplear marcadores explícitos de relaciones inter-oracionales, como *por ejemplo* o *de todos modos*. Estudios en diversas lenguas sobre habilidades narrativas en niños entre las edades de cuatro y diez años, en idiomas como el inglés, alemán, francés y chino, han demostrado que el uso de elementos lingüísticos internos del discurso para presentar y mantener a los personajes en un cuento y anclarlos en espacio y tiempo es considerado como un desarrollo prolongado, que sigue evolucionando hasta los diez años y probablemente después (Hickman 2003). Por ejemplo, en los idiomas que utilizan marcadores indefinidos para expresar nueva información –*la niña* refiriéndose a una niña conocida, y *una niña* a una que es desconocida- los niños sólo alrededor de los siete años comienzan a utilizar este recurso para señalar alguna novedad. En idiomas como el chino, que señalan lo nuevo por la posición y donde la nueva información se localiza en posición postverbal, este elemento lingüístico aparece más tarde, alrededor de los diez años de edad. Además, los niños en estos estudios fueron incapaces de proporcionar un anclaje espacial adecuado para la ubicación y los desplazamientos de los personajes en la narración, algo que sólo las personas adultas hicieron. Con respecto a la marcación de distinciones temporales-aspectuales, los niños alrededor de los siete años de edad comenzaron a utilizar la morfología verbal y las partículas para integrar dicha información en el discurso, desarrollo que continuó hasta la edad de los diez años o más tarde. El uso de estos elementos interno-discursivos implica que los niños aprenden a planificar su discurso con el fin de reflejar las necesidades del interlocutor para determinar la novedad de la información, las ubicaciones de los personajes en el cuento y la diferencia entre el foco y el fondo del discurso (Hickman 2003).

Los niños mayores crean estructuras sintácticamente más densas y textos más jerárquicamente organizados. Tanto en el lenguaje oral como escrito, los niños incluyen más cláusulas en sus oraciones y conectan oraciones usando una gama más amplia de elementos lingüísticos. Estudios sobre narraciones y textos expositivos en español y catalán creados por sujetos de nueve a dieciséis años de edad muestran que los niños en diferentes grupos usan distintos tipos de



subordinación, coordinación y yuxtaposición en la combinación de inter-cláusulas (Aparici et al. 2002). En particular, el uso de cláusulas yuxtapuestas lexicalmente no marcadas y de coordinación aditiva disminuye con la edad, mientras que las cláusulas relativas y de complemento se vuelven más comunes. La selección de conectores lingüísticos, sin embargo, difiere en función del género y la modalidad. La coordinación en general y las cláusulas adverbiales temporalmente marcadas son significativamente más frecuentes en narraciones y en textos escritos que en textos expositivos y textos orales, mientras que las cláusulas relativas son más frecuentes en textos expositivos que en textos narrativos, especialmente en la posición del sujeto. En este sentido, se puede decir que la cantidad y el tipo de subordinación funcionan como un indicador de desarrollo sintáctico (Berman 1998).

## 2.2 Significado no convencional

El desarrollo tardío del lenguaje también implica un movimiento más allá de las convenciones, tanto en el léxico como en el nivel textual. Si el temprano desarrollo del léxico culmina en la comprensión del significado convencional, entonces el dominio del lenguaje figurado es un punto de referencia en el desarrollo tardío del lenguaje. *El habla figurada* –metáforas, proverbios, modismos y otros similares– está lejos de ser un fenómeno marginal y su comprensión requiere habilidades importantes, entre ellas distinguir dos o más significados de una palabra; construir una representación coherente de un texto mediante la integración de información léxica y sintáctica con el contexto situacional y lingüístico; y por último ser consciente de que lo que se dice y lo que significa no siempre coinciden (Levorato & Cacciari 2002; Peskin & Olson, este volumen). Aunque algunos investigadores atribuyen a niños más pequeños la capacidad de comprender y producir metáforas e ironía (por ejemplo, Winners 1988), cuando su comportamiento se examina cuidadosamente, resulta que antes de los siete años, los niños procesan el lenguaje literalmente, incluso cuando no tiene sentido en un contexto determinado (1989 de Cacciari & Levorato, para modismos; Vosniadou 1987, para metáforas). Tarda hasta los diez a doce años de edad para que las intenciones y los estados internos del hablante se tomen plenamente en cuenta.

La habilidad para entender el habla figurada se encuentra muy afectada por la transparencia semántica de las expresiones y por la familiaridad de los niños con los dominios implicados. Así, expresiones como ‘ya ni llorar es bueno’ son interpretadas con éxito por niños de diez y once años, pues el vínculo entre el significado literal e idiomático está semánticamente motivado, (Cacciari & Levorato 1989). Del mismo modo, para las metáforas: las metáforas atributivas, en las cuales existe una directa conexión física entre los elementos comparados -ej., ‘blanco como la nieve’ - se entienden a más temprana edad que las metáforas

relacionales como ‘corazón de piedra’ que implican una relación menos evidente entre los términos (Gentner 1988). Además, existe un considerable salto en el desarrollo entre la capacidad para comprender y producir el habla figurada: sólo los adolescentes parecen utilizar el habla figurada de manera creativa.

La capacidad de distinguir lo que se dice de lo que significa también se ve afectada por el género. Lee et al (2001) pidieron a los niños distinguir entre una repetición literal y un parafraseo directo de un enunciado; el porcentaje de aciertos fue mayor en las canciones infantiles, las cuales destacan la forma superficial, que en las narraciones donde el contenido tiene precedentes sobre la forma. Con la edad, el efecto del género disminuyó y el desempeño exitoso de los niños se volvió más constante en ambas tareas. La sensibilidad de los niños más pequeños a las restricciones de género les impedía distinguir en general entre las repeticiones literales y las paráfrasis. Los autores interpretan dicho resultado como la necesidad de la capacidad para reflexionar sobre los textos como consecuencia de la alfabetización académica. De hecho, la sensibilidad de género por parte de los niños pequeños es notable: parecen darse cuenta que parafrasear es bastante aceptable en las narraciones, pero inadecuado en el caso de la poesía.

El uso del humor en acertijos y chistes por parte de estudiantes de bachillerato y universidad es a menudo lingüístico, pero la ambigüedad es una constante en todos los tipos del uso del lenguaje. La capacidad para comprender las expresiones ambiguas como en el ejemplo (1) se considera parte de la competencia lingüística de todo hablante (Pollock 1997).

- (1) a. La mujer golpeó al hombre con un bastón.  
b. El perro está listo para comer.

Sin embargo, la investigación del desarrollo del lenguaje muestra que esto es cierto sólo después de los once años (Shultz & Pilton 1973). Los niños más pequeños son capaces de comprender la ambigüedad fonológica y léxica, pero no la ambigüedad de superficie (1a) o profunda (1b). En circunstancias normales, niños menores de once años utilizan señales extralingüísticas para seleccionar una interpretación adecuada. Sin embargo, el enfoque metalingüístico requerido para resolver la ambigüedad a nivel de oración en oraciones aisladas y descontextualizadas es un desarrollo prolongado.

Finalmente, a pesar de la amplia variedad y sofisticación de los actos de habla de los niños pequeños, es sólo a partir de los cinco años o más tarde que empiezan a usar el lenguaje para engañar (por ejemplo, Sodian 1991; Sotillo & Riviere 2001). Todos los tipos de uso figurado –metáfora, ironía, modismos y chistes - implican una diferencia entre el significado literal y el intencionado, pero el objetivo comunicativo se alcanza cuando el interlocutor percibe el significado intencionado. En el engaño, el significado literal coincide con el significado

previsto, pero –sin el conocimiento del interlocutor - este significado es falso. Tal uso de palabras para manipular deliberadamente el estado mental de los demás es un desarrollo tardío.

Estudios sobre el uso del género en niños (Hudson & Shapiro 1991; Pontecorvo & Morani 1996; Sandbank 2002) han encontrado que éstos emplean diferentes formas para reflejar diversos propósitos comunicativos, es decir, el problema de transmitir la información en un determinado género se resuelve a muy temprana edad. La observación de los niños sobre las restricciones de género tiende, con la edad, a flexibilizarse mientras desarrollan cada vez mayor competencia en la modalidad escrita. Los límites entre los tipos de texto se vuelven más flexibles de manera que los adolescentes y los adultos pueden incluir análisis reflexivos en sus relatos y anécdotas personales en sus textos expositivos (Berman & Katzenberg 2004; Berman & Nir-Saviv 2004; Reilly et al. en prensa). Los tipos de texto se convierten cada vez más divergentes y menos canónicos.

### 2.3 El desarrollo del diálogo

Como se ha señalado, el intercambio verbal, no verbal y el cambio de turno es una habilidad muy precoz. Durante los dos primeros años de vida, los niños en las culturas occidentales son capaces de seleccionar respuestas adecuadas a los diferentes actos de habla basados en un contexto del mundo real y en patrones tonales del interlocutor. Sin embargo, los niños al interactuar con sus compañeros, no logran continuar un tema de discusión y confían, en cambio, en mecanismos imitativos durante estos intercambios - repeticiones o variaciones ritualizadas de los enunciados de los demás - ( Blank & Franklin 1980 ) . Sólo después de los cuatro años de edad los niños pueden tener en cuenta no sólo la forma y la función de lo enunciado por los demás, sino también la estructura general de la conversación, de modo que empiezan a producir respuestas que van más allá de contestar al interlocutor, y que sirve para mantener el intercambio conversacional en proceso (Blum- Kulka, este volumen). Por ejemplo, el uso de coletillas interrogativas como ‘¿verdad?’ y otros tipos de marcadores discursivos sirven esta doble función de reaccionar ante el interlocutor y de mantener períodos más extensos del discurso. Del mismo modo, el uso de la elipsis verbal (al contestar ‘Sí, sí quiero’ en vez de ‘Sí, quiero tomar un poco de jugo de naranja’) cumple la doble función de reforzar la cohesión y motivar más conversación (Karmiloff y Karmiloff -Smith 2001). Los niños, con la edad, intentan cada vez más crear vínculos dentro de su propio discurso, y entre su discurso y el del interlocutor; una progresión, que entre otras cosas, da lugar a una disminución en los turnos conversacionales no relacionados y el uso creciente de los turnos ‘relacionados

con la perspectiva' que toma en cuenta la perspectiva de la otra persona (Dorval y Eckerman, 1984).

En resumen, aunque los niños desde muy temprana edad son capaces de sostener un intercambio rico y complejo, ocurre hasta la edad preescolar, alrededor de cinco o seis años, que los niños pueden ir más allá del intercambio al diálogo y a la conversación.

## 2.4 Mundos alternativos

En cualquier situación en donde la gente escribe o habla, transmite no sólo contenido, sino también su relación con tal contenido – su conexión personal y social, así como su relación con sus oyentes. Esta 'postura del discurso' hacia el contenido, mensaje y la audiencia ha sido estudiada desde diferentes perspectivas (por ejemplo, Berman et al. 2002; Ochs, 1990). Uno de los componentes de esta postura es la expresión de actitudes epistémicas y efectivas hacia un mensaje: la modalidad. Estas actitudes se expresan de forma diferente en las diversas culturas, pero cada lengua tiene elementos lingüísticos que funcionan como marcadores de modalidad para transmitir información, como la certeza del hablante sobre un evento o el deseo de que ocurra.

La modalidad comprende una gama de significados incluyendo intención, deseo, duda, posibilidad y probabilidad; sin embargo, los lingüistas se han ocupado principalmente de la diferencia entre la modalidad epistémica y deóntica (Lyons, 1977; Reilly et al. 2002). Semánticamente, el modo epistémico 'caracteriza a la realidad de un evento en términos de situaciones o mundos posibles alternativos' (Chung & Timberlake 1985:242), es decir, que expresa una posibilidad hipotética o contra-factual en lugar de una situación real. El modo deóntico, por otro lado, caracteriza a un evento como permisible, necesario o deseable en una situación dada. Asimismo, requiere una respuesta única y singular de una situación; el modo epistémico abre el camino a muchas posibilidades alternativas.

En el estudio de diversas lenguas sobre cómo los niños desarrollan las habilidades para crear textos (véase Nota 4), un cambio notable relacionado con la edad en las actitudes de los niños hacia los temas sobre conflictos en la escuela fue la transición de un modo deóntico a un modo epistémico (Reilly et al. 2002). En diferentes lenguas, los niños de los grupos de menor edad y grado escolar consideraban que los conflictos, sobre los cuales se les pidió discutir, eran malos – así como en el ejemplo (2a) tomado de una conversación de un niño de primaria; por otro lado, los niños mayores fueron más abiertos a alternativas, posibilidades y dudas – así como en el ejemplo (2b) tomado de una conversación de un joven de preparatoria.

2) a. *Que está muy mal*  
'that it is very bad'

*No se tiene que hacer en clase*  
It should not be done in class

b. *Si no hubiera conflictos, no seríamos buenos amigos.*  
'If there were no conflicts we wouldn't be good friends'

Los adverbios, los operadores modales y los auxiliares modales que sirven para expresar modos deónticos o epistémicos en diferentes idiomas, como en inglés, *may, could, maybe, possibly* para el modo epistémico y *must, should, necessarily* para el modo deóntico – son parte del repertorio de las formas lingüísticas de los niños desde muy temprano. Pero el uso de estos dispositivos es diferente cuando se habla de un tema y cuando se cuenta una historia personal sobre ese tema. En este último caso, los niños usan menos modales y diferentes tipos de adverbios.

Un movimiento similar del modo deóntico al modo epistémico, y otro ejemplo de desarrollo prolongado más allá de la similitud formal, se ve en la elección de las construcciones que varían según el *modo* (condicional, imperativo, y el subjuntivo comparado con el indicativo), especialmente en una lengua como el español, donde éste se marca con inflexión. Distinciones adecuadas del modo presentan desafíos cognitivos específicos, ya que se requiere que los niños formen representaciones mentales de eventos que son independientes, o incluso incompatibles con la realidad. Los niños hispanohablantes muestran dominio temprano de paradigmas modales-flexivos (Pérez-Leroux 1998), y a los dos años muchos de ellos producen formas del subjuntivo (López-Ornat et al., 1994). Sin embargo, hay formas que se utilizan solamente con su valor deóntico para expresar ordenes y complementos de verbos deónticos, como el ejemplo (3) tomado de Hernandez-Pina (1984).

3) *No bebas sufa [Rafael, 2; 0]*  
-SUBJ-  
"No bebas, está sucio"

Los niños un poco mayores usan con éxito subjuntivos en las narraciones (Naharro, 1996), pero estos niños no pueden transferir dichos usos para expresar entidades no reales por medio de las cláusulas relativas de subjuntivo, como en el ejemplo (4); incluso después de que las construcciones de cláusula relativa son parte de su gramática.

#### 4) *Un cielo que tenga estrellas rojas*

-SUBJ-

La razón por la cual los niños no lo hacen es porque no pueden interpretar las entidades contempladas – en este caso, el cielo – como no real.

Incluso antes de los tres años, los niños son capaces de expresar dos predicados en un solo enunciado: una cláusula de complemento precedido por una cláusula que expresa una actitud mental sobre el contenido, como en el ejemplo (5).

#### 5) a. *Mira lo que he hecho*

b. *Quiero que juegues*

Este proceso ocurre a una edad temprana con verbos de percepción o deseo como los equivalentes en inglés del ejemplo (5a) y (5b). Sin embargo, sólo después de los cinco años la misma construcción formal se generaliza a verbos de estado mental, aunque, una vez más, verbos mentales como *saber* forman parte del repertorio de los niños pequeños. Además, los primeros usos de estos verbos no dan cabida a la semántica de los complementarios – la posible discrepancia entre el valor de verdad de la cláusula de complemento y el de la oración en su conjunto. Los niños menores de tres años no pueden contestar correctamente a la pregunta ‘¿Qué dijo Juan que bebió?’ – si Juan bebió algo diferente de lo que dijo que hizo (de Villiers & de Villiers 2000). La semántica de los complementarios de este modo proporciona una ventana a otros mundos posibles, mentales y comunicativos en los cuales las proposiciones pueden ser verdaderas aún si sus complementos no lo son. De alguna manera, tal vez con la ayuda de los rasgos formales de la oración, los niños con la edad llegan a darse cuenta que el valor de verdad de la proposición debe estar compuesto con respecto a estos mundos alternativos y no al mundo real.

¿Cuál es el común denominador de la habilidad para participar de manera relevante en una conversación, para producir y comprender los usos no literales del lenguaje, para utilizar oraciones complejas y construir textos más cohesivos? Todas estas habilidades implican *convergencia*: una adaptación más adecuada a las circunstancias comunicativas, que incluye la consideración del contexto y la expresión; la coordinación de similitudes y diferencias; y sobre todo, la conciencia del estado mental del interlocutor. Al mismo tiempo, todas estas habilidades implican una *disociación* – entre la intención y la expresión, entre un significado posible y otro, entre lo intencionado y lo mostrado – que posibilita la divergencia de la convención, del género canónico y del significado literal. La teoría de la mente (TM) proporciona el requisito psicológico para el desarrollo de estos rasgos característicos del desarrollo tardío del lenguaje; la alfabetización académica

proporciona los medios lingüísticos para la realización de esta posibilidad psicológica.

### **3. Cómo se relaciona la teoría de la mente (TM) con las características centrales del desarrollo tardío del lenguaje**

Los niños pequeños son conscientes de que la imaginación y las creencias son fenómenos mentales y que las imágenes mentales son distintas a los objetos en el mundo físico. Sin embargo, son incapaces de comprender la naturaleza indirecta de las creencias de los demás. Esta capacidad parece surgir alrededor de los cinco años y tiene una base neuronal: las personas con problemas como el autismo a menudo tienen un persistente daño de la teoría de la mente y los pacientes con lesiones cerebrales pueden desarrollar tal deficiencia como consecuencia de su lesión (Siegal & Varley 2002).

En tareas de razonamiento de teoría de la mente, la mayoría de los niños de tres años y algunos de cuatro años no pueden realizarlas, pero los niños de cinco años sí pueden. Las dificultades de los niños más pequeños probablemente provienen de su consideración de las creencias como una copia más que una representación construida de la realidad (Wellman 1990); es decir, los niños pequeños esperan que las creencias de las otras personas sean fieles representaciones de la realidad sin considerar cómo o cuándo se formaron estas creencias. Sin embargo, entender el estado mental es esencial para formar relaciones interpersonales, para reconocer los motivos de la gente por su comportamiento y para anticipar las reacciones, puesto que sustenta la adaptación social, la sensibilidad de las necesidades de la propia audiencia y la conciencia del conocimiento compartido.

Algunos estudios (Pérez-Leroux 1998; de Villiers & de Villiers 2000) han establecido vínculos entre la teoría de la mente (TM), la aparición y generalización de ciertos elementos lingüísticos o construcciones. Incluso cuando un vínculo no ha sido comprobado por medio de experimentos, es razonable suponer tal relación. La interacción conversacional sería tanto una consecuencia como un prerrequisito de la teoría de la mente (TM), ya que leer las intenciones del interlocutor es esencial para llevar a cabo una conversación guiada por los principios de la relevancia. Lo mismo sucede con la semántica, en particular la semántica léxica de los estados mentales. En este sentido, 'el desarrollo conceptual y lingüístico podrían ir de la mano' (Gopnik & Meltzoff 1997). Sin un adecuado léxico es imposible expresar estados mentales, y sin alguna comprensión de tales estados, no se puede adquirir el léxico. Un caso similar es la dificultad para generalizar el uso de subjuntivo para describir estados contra-factuales como en el ejemplo (4). Lo que falta es la capacidad total para la representación mental de la no realidad, quizás la misma habilidad necesaria para

la comprensión de las falsas creencias. Desde la perspectiva de la semántica formal, ambas habilidades requieren la capacidad de considerar más de un mundo posible. Finalmente, la sintaxis también participa en la forma del proceso sintáctico de complementación que permite que un argumento proposicional se subordine a otro.

El lenguaje desempeña un papel en la aparición de nuevas formas de conceptualización de eventos, pero al mismo tiempo, este desarrollo cognitivo hace posible el tipo de doble perspectiva implicadas en la habilidad aquí analizada: nuestro propio estado mental frente al de otro, las verdaderas creencias contra las falsas creencias. Estas nuevas formas de pensar amplían el repertorio de las representaciones lingüísticas y a través de ellas se hacen posibles nuevas formas de razonamiento. El lenguaje de la complementación proporciona una nueva capacidad de representación para expresar actitudes proposicionales.

#### **4. Cómo afecta la alfabetización al desarrollo tardío del lenguaje**

El término 'alfabetización' aquí se refiere no sólo a la adquisición de las habilidades del lenguaje escrito, sino a la alfabetización social; al proceso por el cual los sujetos que crecen en una comunidad educada se familiarizan con el repertorio de variedades discursivas que caracterizan a tal comunidad. La alfabetización moldea el desarrollo tardío del lenguaje. Pues con la edad, los niños son expuestos cada vez más a una amplia gama de formas lingüísticas asociadas con la escritura – no sólo a través de textos, sino también a través de la interacción oral (Blum-Kulka, este volumen). Muchos de los rasgos lingüísticos mencionados anteriormente como característicos del desarrollo tardío del lenguaje son los relacionados con los registros escritos.

Una consecuencia ampliamente reconocida de la introducción de la escritura en una comunidad de habla es que pone a disposición una mayor diversidad de formas lingüísticas para una variedad de circunstancias comunicativas. Incluso cuando se introducen registros escritos por primera vez, estos difieren lingüísticamente de los registros hablados preexistentes, al 'incluir mayor elaboración estructural y léxica y mayor integración informativa, conectada con un menor grado de reducción e interacción estructural' (Biber 1995:311).

La alfabetización académica no sólo crea un repertorio más amplio de registros y la ampliación del rango de variación lingüística en varias dimensiones, sino también patrones más amplios de la variación lingüística. Es decir, la alfabetización académica aumenta la heterogeneidad de los usos del lenguaje, mientras que, al mismo tiempo, facilita la creación de estándares normativos. La capacidad evolutiva para comparar el funcionamiento de los elementos lingüísticos en diferentes usos conduce a una reorganización de elementos en los sistemas coordinados (Karmiloff-Smith 1986b).



Sin embargo, otra forma en la cual la escritura influye en el desarrollo del lenguaje es a través de su naturaleza específica como un modo de reproducción. La escritura libera el procesamiento del lenguaje de la presión de tiempo, característica del lenguaje oral, permitiendo así el desarrollo de las capacidades lingüísticas contemplativas – y la consideración de sonidos y palabras aisladas.

## **5. Indicaciones para investigaciones futuras**

Este capítulo ha examinado varias facetas del desarrollo tardío del lenguaje en la edad escolar centrándose en elementos influenciados por la alfabetización académica, y lo que puede atribuirse en parte a los efectos de la educación. Para lograr una comprensión más general del desarrollo tardío del lenguaje también se necesita una perspectiva intercultural. Aunque el fundamento psicológico de las tendencias descritas anteriormente puede ser una dotación humana universal, las formas en que se expresan estas características están determinadas culturalmente. En otras culturas, la conciencia del estado mental de un interlocutor podría posiblemente no expresarse por turnos conversacionales, o por textos más cohesionados, sino por otros medios lingüísticos o extralingüísticos.

El tema del habla figurada, que es una característica crucial del desarrollo tardío del lenguaje, también merece un estudio más a fondo, entre ellas estudios de producción en elicitaciones contextualizadas (por ejemplo, parte de un relato) y estudios de comprensión en línea (por ejemplo, la medición de tiempo de reacción) y estudios de comprensión fuera de línea (por ejemplo, al cuestionar abiertamente, al solicitar paráfrasis, etc.). Y se necesita un control más cuidadoso de los tipos de materiales lingüísticos que se utilizan. El estudio de la vía de desarrollo de expresiones idiomáticas, proverbios, sarcasmo, metáforas, símil, chistes, adivinanzas y muchos otros usos no literales del lenguaje pueden proporcionar ideas valiosas en una serie de preguntas. Entre éstas sería cómo los niños establecen vínculos entre las expresiones lingüísticas y los contextos; cómo distinguen significados alternativos de expresiones a nivel palabra y oración; el papel de la metalingüística en el uso del lenguaje; la relación del léxico en la sintaxis, etc. Todo el dominio del habla figurada debe examinarse desde una perspectiva psicolingüística y de estudios en diversas lenguas, para identificar los procesos lingüísticos específicos y cognitivos generales involucrados.

En general se acepta que a los cinco años, los niños tienen acceso a la mayoría de las estructuras lingüísticas de su lengua. Sin embargo, la forma en que utilizan, almacenan, organizan, seleccionan y modifican las estructuras lingüísticas específicas en diferentes situaciones comunicativas continúa desarrollándose en la infancia más tardía. Mientras los niños maduran, estas estructuras muestran mayor convergencia y flexibilidad al adaptarse a diferentes situaciones y

hablantes, así como una divergencia creciente hacia opciones más abiertas de expresión lingüística.

## Notas

\* La redacción del capítulo fue financiada parcialmente por un subsidio del Ministerio español de educación y ciencia DGES B-502000-076. Estoy en deuda con Ruth Berman por sus comentarios detallados y conocimiento invaluable. Soy responsable de una mala interpretación o deficiencias que existan.

1. Al examinar los problemas de los dos principales diarios de los años 2000-2002, encontré que de 94 artículos principales sólo 7 tenían sujetos mayores de seis, además de dos artículos tipo nota sobre hablantes mayores y una revisión de un libro sobre el desarrollo tardío del lenguaje. De los siete artículos, dos se referían a la evolución del habla figurada y el resto eran sobre la conciencia de unidades lingüísticas y sobre la relación del desarrollo tardío del lenguaje y la alfabetización. En pocas palabras resume el ámbito del campo.

2. En este contexto, *La forma lingüística* se utiliza para los recursos lingüísticos en todos los niveles del lenguaje, desde la fonología hasta el texto, incluyendo fonemas, sílabas, morfemas libres y ligados, estructuras sintácticas y procesos gramaticales (Berman 1997a; Hickmann 2003). El término *función* se refiere a la manera en que tales formas se utilizan para expresar el contenido de referencia, el flujo de información en un discurso extenso y los muchos otros objetivos del uso del lenguaje en contexto (Budwig 1991; Hickmann 2003).

3. Sub-generalizar es usar una palabra categoría para referirse solamente a un objeto en particular, por ejemplo cuando un niño dice 'copa' para referirse sólo a su propia copa no a la de los demás; sobre-generalizar es usar una palabra con términos extensos, así como decir 'árbol' para referirse a cualquier tipo de planta.

4. El estudio se realizó como parte del proyecto de estudios en diversas lenguas sobre El Desarrollo de la Alfabetización en Diferentes Idiomas y Diferentes Contextos (Ruth Berman, PI), contemplados en los capítulos por Jisa, Khorounjaia & Tolchinsky y por Wengelin & Strömquist en este volumen.

5. En el inglés americano, alrededor de 5,9 expresiones no literales se emiten por minuto de discurso oral libre (Pollio et al., 1997). El lenguaje dirigido a niños está lleno de usos figurados (Nippold 1991), y los cuentos infantiles contienen varios tipos de comparaciones verbales (Broderick 1992).

6. Una tarea típica para evaluar la teoría de la mente (TM) es la '*prueba de las falsas creencias*' (Wimmer & Perner 1983) con respecto a las expectativas equivocadas. A los niños se les muestra una caja usada de algún producto conocido (digamos una marca familiar de caramelo), que resulta contener algo diferente, por ejemplo lápices. Luego se les interroga sobre lo que creían que estaba en la caja y sobre lo que creería un amigo que no ha visto el contenido inesperado de la caja. Otras tareas se basan en los desplazamientos invisibles, siguiendo la misma lógica, con la finalidad de explorar si los niños pueden enfocar e interpretar los diferentes estados mentales, además del vocabulario que usan para referirse a ellos.

## **ANALYSIS**

In the following pages, an analysis of the translated article is presented. A detailed analysis of the difficulties and problems presented when doing the translation is expected to be useful for future or novice translators who wish to know more about the translation techniques employed.

As was stated in the Literature Review section, all translation techniques or procedures are used according to the level of difficulty: Borrowing, calque, literal translation, transposition, modulation, equivalence and adaptation. It is important to mention that there are two other techniques which were used as well: amplification or expansion and reduction. So, in order to accomplish the principal goal, all these procedures are used in different degrees in order to transmit the message from the source language into the target language.

In order to carry out this analysis, the translation techniques previously described are going to be applied one by one followed by a brief explanation and definition of each procedure. To make this analysis understandable, the translator has decided to make comparative charts divided in two parts: the first part has an example of the source language (SL) and in the second one the translation in the target language (TL). In the Spanish translation part, there is also the page number in case the readers need to compare the information.

## BORROWING

This procedure consists of taking words or phrases from the source language into the target language without changing the base form in order to preserve the cultural meaning. It is the simplest of all techniques and is used as a matter of style. In the following chart, there is an example.

Source Language	Target Language
As children grow, their sources of language <b>input</b> become increasingly varied.	Conforme los niños crecen, sus fuentes de <b>input</b> lingüístico se vuelven cada vez más variadas.

In this example, I decided to use the borrowing technique in order to maintain the message of the author. Besides, the terms in the target language keep their original function and could be compared with other papers about the same field.

## CALQUE

Calque is a special kind of borrowing; in this case, however, the elements of the expression taken are translated literally. We can use this method when we want to wipe out the foreign words so that the translation seems more natural.

Source Language	Target Language
Universal Grammar	Gramática Universal
<i>Epistemic and deontic modality.</i>	La modalidad epistémica y deóntica.

These two cases are very simple examples of the use of calque. The translation was made literally and the word order was changed. Therefore, '*gramática universal and la modalidad epistémica y deóntica*' have the same equivalence, style, effect and meaning in both languages.

## LITERAL TRANSLATION

This method allows the translator to translate the expression word by word without changing the linguistic components of the source language. The translator with this technique only notices the adherence to the linguistic servitudes of the target language. The literal translation technique is one of the most common in translation practice.

<b>Source Language</b>	<b>Target Language</b>
The woman hit the man with a cane.	La mujer golpeó al hombre con un bastón.
The development of dialogue.	El desarrollo del diálogo

Literal translation was employed in both examples because the transference into the target language is direct and the same grammatical structure is rendered. This technique was the most used and there are plenty of examples of this procedure in the translation as well.

## TRANSPOSITION

Transposition occurs when we replace one word class with another without modifying the meaning of the original message. Grammatical changes occurred throughout the text, as we expected. To make this method understandable, the example presented here follows a word category which is changing a gerund noun phrase into an infinitive noun phrase:

Source Language	Target Language
Development does not consist of <b>accumulating</b> new linguistic forms.	El desarrollo del lenguaje no consiste en <b>acumular</b> nuevas formas lingüísticas.

To respect the word categories would have meant odd or meaningless sentences. Therefore, I employed the transposition method when changing '*accumulating*' from the source language that is functioning as a gerund into an infinitive in the target language. The change didn't affect the idea of the sentence.



## MODULATION

For Venuti (2000, p. 89), modulation is a variation of the form of the message, obtained by a change in the point of view. The change can be justified if one translation results unsuitable, unidiomatic or in an awkward utterance even when it is grammatically correct. Some kinds of transposition are the opposing terms, the double negation turned into an affirmative, the passive to active forms, the change of symbols and the change from a common to a more refined form.

Source Language	Target Language
Discourse does not exist in a void.	El discurso no surge de la nada.
And more careful control <b>is needed</b> of the kinds of linguistic materials that <b>are used</b> .	Y <b>se necesita</b> un control más cuidadoso de los tipos de materiales lingüísticos que <b>se utilizan</b> .

Modulation was needed in order to change the point of view of the message. In the first example, the sentence form was changed into a more well-known form in Spanish. In the second one, the sentence was translated from passive to active; as

a result there was a syntactic change. In Spanish, the passive voice is not frequently used.

## EQUIVALENCE

For Munday (2001, p. 58), the equivalence technique is used in cases where languages describe the same situation by different stylistics or structural means. This technique can be used when dealing with idioms, proverbs, slangs, onomatopoeia, clichés, nominal or adjectival phrases.

<b>Source Language</b>	<b>Target Language</b>
To cry over spilt milk.	Ya ni llorar es bueno.
White as snow.	Blanco como la nieve.

The first one is an English saying; therefore I had to look for an equivalent expression in the target language, in this case '*Ya ni llorar es bueno*' is the closest equivalent to the original English sentence. In the second one, we have a metaphor that fortunately has an equivalent in Spanish.

## ADAPTATION

We use the adaptation technique when there are cases where the situation described does not have an equivalent or a cultural meaning in the target language. In those cases, the translator is required to create a new situation that can perform as being equivalent, taking into account that the register and style have to be kept. Here you have an example.

Source Language	Target Language
In the <b>cross-linguistic</b> study on children's developing skills in text construction...	En el <b>estudio de diversas lenguas</b> sobre cómo los niños desarrollan las habilidades para crear textos...

The adaptation technique is used in the adjective '*cross-linguistic*' which refers to the study made in different languages. Therefore, I translated this word using the definition because of its complexity, also to prevent misunderstandings in the future.

## EXPANSION OR AMPLIFICATION

Translators apply this method in order to make the message clearer. Consequently, it consists of the addition of more words or information into the target language. This technique is frequently used in translating texts into Spanish. These are some examples of expansion:

Source Language	Target Language
Finally, theories of later language development are influenced by the idea of a strong linkage to <b>literacy</b> .	Finalmente, las teorías del desarrollo tardío del lenguaje están influenciadas por la idea de un fuerte vínculo con la <b>alfabetización académica</b> .
<b>As noted</b> , turn-taking, non-verbal and verbal interchange is a very precocious skill.	<b>Como se ha señalado</b> , el intercambio verbal, no verbal y el cambio de turno es una habilidad muy precoz.

## REDUCTION

It consists of the omission of unnecessary information in the target language. It is also used to avoid redundancy or repetition and to make the message clearer. The following is an example of this technique applied in translation.

Source Language	Target Language
It would be wrong, however, to regard the age of five as a <b>cut-off point</b> between the use of basic and complex structures.	Sin embargo, sería erróneo considerar la edad de cinco años como un <b>límite</b> entre el uso de estructuras básicas y estructuras complejas

## CONCLUSIONS

Nowadays, the translation field is growing worldwide; translators are requested more and more with the aim of being a bridge between cultures and peoples. However, being a translator is not an easy task since this job requires a lot of preparation and a vast knowledge in the field in order to develop a high-quality work. That is why now I realize that this job is challenging but at the same time rewarding because at the end the translator sees the results of his work.

During the process of doing this monographic study, I faced different challenges. First of all, I had to get familiar with the topic I was going to translate. I had to search more information in order to better understand the content and context of the article. I analyzed the terms which seemed to have a complex meaning and I had to consult experts in the linguistic field. In some way, the text I translated had a high degree of difficulty because it was classified as scientific.

Secondly, it was necessary to use different methods to carry out an efficient translation. I used many kinds of dictionaries including linguistic and lexicographic dictionaries that were very useful. On the other hand, I applied nine techniques translation which were borrowing, calque, literal, transposition, modulation, equivalence, adaptation, expansion and reduction. There were also some

expressions that caused me trouble because of their specialized terminology; therefore the use of corpuses, glossaries and articles online was really helpful.

Finally, the assistance and advice of my supervisors was really vital and extremely important since their comments and opinions helped to reach the expected translation.

As a conclusion, I accomplished my main goal which was to carry out a useful translation which will benefit all those students and persons who do not have a sufficient knowledge to understand the original version. I also used to think that anyone who speaks a second language could be a translator but now I see that this statement is not always applicable and true, due to the high level of complexity this trade implies.

## REFERENCES

- Bassnett, S. (2002). *Translation Studies (Third edition)*. Routledge: London and New York.
- Fawcett, P. (1997) *Translation and Language*. St. Jerome: Manchester.
- Microsoft Encarta (2008). *Microsoft Student con Encarta Premium*. Redmond: EE UU.
- Munday, J (2001). *Introducing translation theories: Theories and applications*. Routledge. London and New York.
- Newmark, P. (1988). *A Textbook of Translation*. Prentice Hall International: New York, London, Toronto, Sydney and Tokyo.
- Nida, E. A. and C.R.Taber (1982). *The Theory and Practice of Translation*. The United Bible Societies: E. J. Brill, Leiden.
- Robinson, D. (2003). *Becoming a translator: An Introduction to the Theory and Practice of Translation (second edition)*. Routledge: London and New York.
- Venuti, L. (2000). *The Translation Studies Reader*. Routledge: London and New York.
- Zanier, A. (2011). *Apuntes sobre Técnicas de Traducción*. Chetumal, QR: Universidad de Quintana Roo.



Yule, G. 2003. *The Study of Language*. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press.

Bransford J. D., (1999) *How Children Learn* in How people learn [On-line] . Available at: <http://www.nap.edu/html/howpeople1/ch4.html>

*Cambridge Dictionaries Online* (2009). Cambridge University Press. Available at: <http://dictionary.cambridge.org/>

*Longman Dictionary of Contemporary English*. (2003) England: Pearson Education Ltd.

*Real Academia Española*. Retrieved March 15, 2014 from <http://www.rae.es/>

Pei, Mario A., and Gaynor, F. (1954). *A dictionary of linguistics*. New York: Philosophical Library. Retrieved March 20, 2014 from: <http://www.sil.org/linguistics/GlossaryOfLinguisticTerms/WhatIsAFreeTranslation.htm>

*WordReference Online Dictionary* (2014). Available at: [www.wordreference.com](http://www.wordreference.com)

*Oxford Dictionary of English* (2001). Oxford University Press.

*British National Corpus (BNC)* (2010). Retrieved March 24, 2014 from: <http://www.natcorp.ox.ac.uk/>

*Corpus of Contemporary American English (COCA)* (2012). Retrieved March 30, 2014 from: <http://corpus.byu.edu/coca/>

*Michigan Corpus of Academic Spoken English (MICASE)* (2007). Available at: <http://quod.lib.umich.edu/m/micase/>

*Diccionarios Lingüística* (2014). Available at:  
<http://www.lexicool.com/diccionarios-en-linea.asp?FSP=C39&FKW=linguistica>

# APPENDIX

TRENDS IN  
LANGUAGE ACQUISITION RESEARCH 3

IASCL

INTERNATIONAL ASSOCIATION  
FOR THE STUDY  
OF CHILD LANGUAGE

Language Development  
across  
Childhood and Adolescence

*Edited by Ruth A. Berman*

JOHN BENJAMINS PUBLISHING COMPANY



The paper used in this publication meets the minimum requirements of the American National Standard for Information Sciences – Permanence of Paper for Printed Library Materials, ANSI Z39.48-1984.

**Library of Congress Cataloging-in-Publication Data**

Language Development across Childhood and Adolescence / edited by Ruth A. Berman.

p. cm. (Trends in Language Acquisition Research, ISSN 1569-0644 ; v. 3)

Includes bibliographical references and index.

1. Language acquisition. I. Berman, Ruth Aronson. II. Series.

P118.L262                      2004

401.93-dc22

2004058010

ISBN 978 90 272 3473 5 (EUR) / 978 1 58811 582 9 (US) (Hb ; alk. paper)

ISBN 978 90 272 9500 2 (Eb)

© 2004 – John Benjamins B.V.

No part of this book may be reproduced in any form, by print, photoprint, microfilm, or any other means, without written permission from the publisher.

John Benjamins Publishing Co. · P.O. Box 36224 · 1020 ME Amsterdam · The Netherlands

John Benjamins North America · P.O. Box 27519 · Philadelphia PA 19118-0519 · USA

# The nature and scope of later language development\*

Liliana Tolchinsky

## 1. Introduction and overview

Few changes in the development of individuals are as remarkable as the emergence of language. It is not surprising, then, that the earliest stages of language acquisition - the appearance of the first words and the first combinations of words - have been of central interest to language researchers.<sup>1</sup> This interest grew considerably following Chomsky's proposal of the innate nature of language acquisition. Although Chomsky's central claim - that language learning is possible due to a pre-wired Universal Grammar - is not an empirical statement but a logical requisite, it led psycholinguists research focuses on the speed with which children acquire language (e.g., McNeil 1970), the amount of innate knowledge they possess, and the similarity of their grammar to that of adults (e.g., Crain & Lillo-Martin 1999). Ironically, it was Carol Chomsky who, in the late sixties, suggested that children's grammar may differ in some ways from that of adults even after age five. This idea gave rise to the domain of 'later language acquisition', the study of what happens to children's language after age five, defined as 'a frontier age psycholinguistically' (Karmiloff-Smith 1986b:455).

After age five, children produce longer sentences, acquire a larger repertoire of syntactic constructions, and are increasingly able to understand and produce constructions that were previously obscure to them. It would be wrong, however, to regard the age of five as a cut-off point between the use of basic and complex structures. What has puzzled researchers is 'protracted acquisition beside formal similarities' (Johnston 1985), the fact that structures of similar complexity but differing functions are sometimes acquired over period of several years.

There are also qualitative changes in the types of words children use, the way they expand sentence constituents, the links they establish between sentences, and the strategies they use to interact with their interlocutors. Their communicative acts are embodied in new means of expressions. Development does not consist of accumulating new linguistic forms; rather, previously acquired forms evolve to acquire new functions, and conversely, old functions come to be expressed by an increasing diversity of linguistic forms (Berman & Slobin 1994; Slobin 1973).<sup>2</sup> This insight is one of the most potent ideas in the study of later language development.

Numerous explanations have been advanced for the developmental changes in the relation of forms to functions. Some scholars have suggested that these changes have a cognitive underpinning. Researchers from various schools of thought -including those who hold that language development is guided by an independent language acquisition device that constraints the hypothesis that child learners make about language structure (Chomsky 1981) -suggest that such a language module may

interact with other cognitive systems. Such interaction could take the general structural constraints on learning or it might reflect the limits that children's available knowledge may set on their ability to discover linguistic patterns (Johnston 1985; Piatelli-Palmarini 1980; Slobin 1985).

Other scholars explain the observed changes by children's increasing experience with language *per se* (Karmiloff-Smith 1979, 1992; López-Ornat 1999). In this view, progress is seen as a move from 'contextualized' to 'decontextualized' mastery of language performance. That is, as children's ability to reflect on language grows, they come to rely less and less on extralinguistic contexts for understanding linguistic expressions, they learn to consider such expressions in themselves, and are increasingly able to use language as a tool for understanding language. Children also become aware that a single linguistic expression may have multiple functions and, conversely, that a single function may be performed by several different expressions. All these are aspects of a process of 'decontextualization', not in the sense that language becomes dissociated from the contexts of its use but, rather, that the ability to separate language from context makes possible a profounder understanding of both, rendering the relation between them more flexible and dynamic.

A third position holds that the crucial motor for change is discourse, which affects the internal organization of sentences and the meaning of sentence elements. It is not that discourse structure emerges only after age five, but that the links children are capable of establishing between discourse components change, bringing about a reorganization of all linguistic systems. 'Discourse provides children with a developmental mechanism for the acquisition of linguistic devices' (Hickmann 2003:335). Discourse does not exist in a void, but within the specific constraints of genre and modality. Like Molière's bourgeois, we speak prose, poetry, narrative or whatever discourse genre the circumstances demand. There is no such thing as *neutral* use of language: People constantly attune their speech to specific intentions, purposes, and interlocutors. Thus, development is viewed in terms of the acquisition of different discourse genres, and the way that the cultural conventions of genres constrain the use of linguistic forms.

Finally, theories of later language development are influenced by the idea of a strong linkage to literacy. In this view, literacy underlies numerous developments, including growth and diversification of the lexicon; assigning new functions to forms previously associated with a single function; establishing inter-sentential connectivity; and understanding of non-literal uses of language, such as metaphor and irony; and far more (Fletcher & Garman 1986; Lee et al. 2001; Olson 1996).

The goal of this concluding chapter is to show that these different approaches to explaining later language development –those that emphasize cognitive underpinning, experience with language *per se*, the effects of genre, and literacy- are inter-related, and their findings can be interpreted in a unified way. I will suggest that later language development is geared for two apparently opposing needs: *appropriateness* and *divergence*. By *appropriateness*, I mean the tendency of language

use to become increasingly attuned to a variety of communicative circumstances; by *divergence*, its tendency to become increasingly individuated and heterogeneous.

An utterance is *appropriate* when it takes into account previous and succeeding utterances, the interlocutor, and the communicative setting in which it is produced. This yields an acceptable choice not merely in grammar and sense, but also relating to the circumstances and interlocutor needs and expectations.

*Divergence* implies that as children grow older, the discrepancies rather than the similarities in their use of language become more evident. This is because those features of language that develop with age are precisely those that are most sensitive to social and cultural experiences, such as advanced vocabulary or low-frequency syntactic structures. As children grow, their sources of language input become increasingly varied. Young children's experience with language is mainly spoken, while schoolchildren and adolescents are also exposed to written input. As demonstrated across the chapters in this book, vocabulary becomes more specialized due to differences in schooling and the semantic specificity of the lexicon changes dramatically with age; children learn to distinguish linguistic registers to make appropriate distinctions between spoken and written usage and more colloquial compared with everyday usage; while the capacity to reflect on language increases, heightening children's sensibility to figurative expression.

I suggest that developing *appropriateness* and *divergence* involves two factors, one psychological and the other cultural. The psychological factor is possession of a 'theory of mind', the ability to understand and reason about the beliefs of others (Perner 1991; Siegal & Varley 2002). The cultural factor is literacy –not just in the narrow sense of learning to read and write, but in the sense of participating in the communicative activities of a literate community (Ravid & Tolchinsky 2002).

## **2. Some features of later language development**

By age five, children have acquired the sentence structure of their language in keeping with target language typological constraints. This includes understanding how to group words within clauses, how to move them inside a sentence to create questions and passive constructions, and how to combine clauses in complex sentences.

In language with rich morphology, children early on master inflectional marking of agreement for such categories as number, gender, and person and they learn to apply principles of productivity and conventionality in the domain of derivation (Berman 2003a; Clark 1993; Clark & Berman 1984; Clark & Hecht 1982; Ravid, this volume).

In lexical development, by age five children show less of a tendency to under- and over-generalize the meanings of words while concurrently being able to form better semantic representations of words in terms of their defining features or core meanings (Dockrell & Messer, this volume; Keil & Batterman 1984).<sup>3</sup> That is, conventional meaning is attained.



Regarding conversation, babies as early as age three months already use communicative gestures unique to our species. Mother and baby begin to talk to each other in turns long before the child is able to utter a word. Young children are good at turn-talking, both with other children and with adults. By the time they produce their first words, children can typically sustain long bouts of well-timed turn alterations (Kaye & Charney 1981; Snow 1997). By the age of three, children can produce and understand all sorts of greetings, prohibitions, demands, requests for shared attention and promises. And they clearly possess a full repertoire of speech acts (Blum-Kulka, this volume; Ninio et al. 1994; Rollins et al. in press).

What aspects of language use, then, develop later? Four main features characterize later language development: texture; meaning beyond conventional senses; dialogue beyond interchange; and the semantics of alternative worlds.

## 2.1 Texture

With age, children's mastery of linguistic texture grows in the sense that they are increasingly able to establish links between linguistic expressions (Both the words *text* and *texture* come from the same Latin word *textus* 'tissue'.) For example, they learn to use anaphoric pronouns and to employ explicit markers of cross-utterance relations, such as *for example* or *all the same*. Cross-linguistic studies of narrative skills in children between the ages of four and ten, in English, German, French, and Mandarin Chinese show that the use of discourse-internal linguistic devices to introduce and maintain the characters in story and to anchor them in space and time is a protracted development, which continues to evolve until age ten and probably afterwards (Hickman 2003). For example, in languages that use indefinite markers for new information – *the girl* for a known girl, *a girl* for an unknown one – children begin to use this device to mark newness only at around age seven. In languages like Chinese, that mark newness by position and where new information is located post-verbally, this device appears even later, around age ten. Further, children in these studies were unable to provide adequate spatial anchoring for the location and displacements of the characters in the narrative, something only adult subjects did. And in marking temporal-aspectual distinctions, children began to use verbal morphology and particles for the grounding of such information in discourse only around age seven, a development that continued until age ten or later. The use of these discourse-internal devices implies that children learn to plan their discourse so as to reflect the interlocutor's need to determine the newness of information, the locations of characters in the story, and the difference between discourse foreground and background (Hickman 2003).

Older children create syntactically denser structures and more hierarchically organized texts. In both spoken and written language, they include more clauses in their sentences and connect sentences using an ampler range of devices. Studies in Spanish and Catalan on narratives and expository texts produced by nine to sixteen-year-olds show that children in different age groups use different types of subordination, coordination, and juxtaposition for inter-clause combining (Aparici

et al. 2002).<sup>4</sup> In particular, use of lexically unmarked juxtaposed clauses and of additive coordination decreases with age, whereas relative and complement clauses become more common. The selection of connective devices, however, differs as a function of genre and modality. Coordination in general, and temporally marked adverbial clauses, are significantly more frequent in narratives than in expository texts, and in written than in spoken texts, whereas relative clauses are more frequent in expository than in narrative texts, particularly in subject position. In this sense, then, both amount and type of subordination can be said to function as a yardstick of syntactic development (Berman 1998).

## 2.2 Non-conventional meaning

Later language development also involves a move beyond conventions, both at the lexical and the textual level. If early lexical development culminates in the understanding of conventional meaning, then the mastery of figurative language is a landmark in later language development. *Figurative speech* – metaphors, proverbs, idioms and the like – is far from a marginal phenomenon, and understanding it requires important skills.<sup>5</sup> These include distinguishing two or more meanings of a word; constructing a coherent representation of a text by integrating lexical and syntactic information with situational and linguistic context; and the awareness that what is said and what is meant do not always coincide (Levorato & Cacciari 2002; Peskin & Olson, this volume). Although some researchers attribute to very young children the capacity to understand and produce metaphors and irony (e.g., Winners 1988), when their behavior is carefully examined, it turns out that prior to age seven, children process language literally, even when it does not make sense in a given context (Cacciari & Levorato 1989, for idioms; Vosniadou 1987, for metaphors). It takes until age ten to twelve for speakers' internal states and intentions to be taken fully into account.

The ability to understand figurative language is strongly affected by the semantic transparency of expressions and by children's familiarity with the domains involved. Thus expressions like 'to cry over spilt milk', in which the link between literal and idiomatic meaning is semantically motivated, are successfully interpreted by ten- and eleven-year-old children (Cacciari & Levorato 1989). Similarly for metaphors: attributive metaphors, in which there is a direct physical connection between the elements compared – e.g, 'white as snow' – are understood much earlier than relational metaphors like 'smooth mood', which involve a less obvious link between the terms (Gentner 1988). Further, there is a considerable developmental gap between the ability to comprehend and to produce figurative language: only adolescents seem to use figurative language creatively.

The ability to distinguish what is said from what is meant is also affected by *genre*. Lee et al. (2001) asked children to distinguish between a verbatim repetition and a close paraphrase of an utterance. The success rate was higher in nursery rhymes, which highlight surface form, than in narratives, where content takes precedents over form. With age, the effect of genre diminished and success became

more consistent across tasks. Younger children's sensitivity to genre constraints prevented them from forming a general distinction between verbatim repetitions and paraphrases. The authors interpret this as requiring the ability to reflect on texts, as a consequence of literacy. In fact, this genre sensitivity on the part of young children is remarkable: They seem to realize that paraphrasing is quite acceptable in narratives, but inappropriate in the case of poetry.

The humor of high schoolers and college students in riddles and jokes is often linguistic, but ambiguity is a constant in all types of language use. The capacity to deal with ambiguous expressions like those in (1) is considered part of the linguistic competence of every speaker (Pollock 1997).

- (1) a. The woman hit the man with a cane.  
b. The dog is ready to eat.

Yet developmental research shows that this is only true after around age eleven (Shultz & Pilon 1973). Younger children are able to deal with phonological and lexical ambiguity, but not with surface (1a) or deep (1b) ambiguity. In normal circumstances, children under age eleven use extralinguistic cues to select a suitable interpretation. However, the metalinguistic approach required to resolve sentence-level ambiguity in decontextualized, isolated sentences is a protracted development.

Finally, in spite of the wide range and sophistication of young children's speech acts, it is only from age five if not later than children use language to *deceive* (e.g., Sodian 1991; Sotillo & Riviere 2001). All types of figurative usage – metaphor, irony, idioms, and jokes – involve a distinction between literal and intended meaning, but the communicative goal is attained when the interlocutor perceives the intended meaning. In deception, the literal meaning coincides with the intended meaning, but – unbeknown to the interlocutor – this meaning is false. Such use of words to purposefully manipulate the mental state of others is a later development.

Studies on young children's use of genre (Hudson & Shapiro 1991; Pontecorvo & Morani 1996; Sandbank 2002) have found that they employ distinctly different forms to reflect different communicative purposes. That is, the problem of casting information into a given genre is solved very early. With age, children's observation of genre constraints tends to relax as they gain increasing competence in the written modality. The boundaries between text types become more flexible, so that adolescents and adults can include reflective analyses in their narratives and personal anecdotes in their expository texts (Berman & Katzenberg 2004; Berman & Nir-Savig 2004; Reilly et al. in press). Text types become less canonical and increasingly divergent.

### 2.3 The development of dialogue

As noted, turn-taking, non-verbal and verbal interchange is a very precocious skill. During the two first years of life, children in Western cultures are able to select

appropriate answers to different speech acts based on a real-world context and intonation patterns of the interlocutor. However, when interacting with peers, they fail to maintain a topic and rely instead on imitative devices – repetitions or ritualized variations of each other’s utterances – during these exchanges (Blank & Franklin 1980). Only after age four can children take into account not only the form and function of the other’s utterance but also the general structure of conversation, so that they start to produce responses that go beyond answering the interlocutor, and serve to keep the conversational interchange going (Blum-Kulka, this volume). For example, the use of utterance-final tags like ‘isn’t it’ and other types of conversational discourse makers serves this double function of reacting to the interlocutor and maintaining longer stretches of discourse. Similarly, use of auxiliary ellipsis (answering ‘Yes, I do’ instead of ‘Yes, I want to have some orange juice’) meets the dual function of strengthening cohesion and of promoting further talk (Karmiloff & Karmiloff-Smith 2001). With age, children increasingly attempt to create links within their own discourse and between their discourse and that of the interlocutor, a progression which inter alia leads to a decrease in unrelated conversational turns and increasing use of ‘perspective-related’ turns that take into account the perspective of the other person (Dorval & Eckerman 1984).

In sum, although children from very early on are capable of sustaining rich and complex interchange, it takes until late preschool age, around five or six years, for them to move beyond interchange to dialogue and conversation.

#### 2.4 Alternative worlds

In any situation in which people write or speak, they convey not only content, but also their relation to that content – their personal and social involvement – as well as their relation to their audience. This ‘discourse stance’ toward content, message, and audience has been studied from various perspectives (e.g., Berman et al. 2002; Ochs 1990). One component of this stance is the expression of epistemic and effective attitudes toward a message: its *modality*. These attitudes are expressed differently in different cultures, but every language has linguistic elements that function as modality makers to convey such information as the speaker’s certainty about an event or the desirability of its occurrence.

Modality comprises a range of meanings, including intent, desire, doubt, possibility, and probability, but linguists have been mainly concerned with the difference between *epistemic* and *deontic* modality (Lyons 1977; Reilly et al. 2002). Semantically, the epistemic mode ‘characterizes the actuality of an event in terms of alternative possible situations, or worlds’ (Chung & Timberlake 1985:242), that is, it expresses a hypothetical or counterfactual possibility rather than a situation. The deontic mode, on the other hand, characterizes an event as being allowable, necessary, or desirable in a given situation. The deontic mode requires a single, unique response to a situation; the epistemic mode opens the way to many alternative possibilities.

In the cross-linguistic study on children's developing skills in text construction (see Note 4) one notable age-related change in children's attitudes towards the topic conflicts at school was the transition from a deontic to an epistemic mode (Reilly et al. 2002). Across different languages, children in the younger, grade school age-group considered that the conflicts they were asked to discuss were bad – as in (2a) from the oral talk of a grade school boy; older children were more open to alternatives, possibilities, and uncertainly – as in (2b), from the talk of a high school boy.

- 2) a. *Que está muy mal*  
'that it is very bad'  
*no se tiene que hacer en clase*  
it should not be done in class
- b. *Si no hubiera conflictos no seríamos buenos amigos*  
'If there were no conflicts we wouldn't be good friends'

The adverbs, modal operator, and modal auxiliaries that serve to express deontic or epistemic modes in different languages – like English *may, could* or *maybe, possibly* for epistemic and *must, should, necessarily* for deontic – are all part of children's repertoire of linguistic forms from early on. But the use of these devices differs when discussing a topic and when telling a personal story about that topic. In the latter case, children use fewer modals and different types of adverbs.

A similar move from the deontic to the epistemic mode, and another example of protracted development beyond formal similarity, is seen in choice of constructions that vary according to *mood* (conditional, imperative, subjunctive compared with indicative), especially in a language like Spanish, where this is marked inflectionally. Appropriate distinctions of mood present specific cognitive challenges, since they require children to form mental representations of events that are independent of, or even incompatible with reality. Spanish children show early mastery inflectional mood paradigms (Pérez-Leroux 1998), and many produce subjunctive forms by age two (López-Ornat et al. 1994). However, these forms are used only with their deontic value in expressing commands and with complements of deontic verbs, as in (3) – from Hernandez-Pina (1984).

- 3) *No bebas sufa* [Rafael, 2;0]  
Not drink-SUBJ dirty  
'Don't drink, it's dirty'

Slightly older children use subjunctives successfully in narratives (Naharro 1996). But these children cannot transfer such uses to express non-actual entities by means of subjunctive relative clauses, as in (4), even well after relative clause constructions have entered their grammar.

- 4) *Un cielo que tenga estrellas rojas*

A sky which has-SUBJ red stars

The reason children fail to do so is because they cannot interpret the entities referred to – in this case, the sky – as non-actual.

Even before age three, children are able to express two predications in a single utterance: a complement clause preceded by a clause that expresses a mental attitude about its content, as in (5).

5) a. *Mira què he fet*

Look what I've done

b. *Quiero que juegues*

I want you to play

This occurs at an early age with verbs of perception or desire – as in the English equivalents of (5a) and (5b) respectively. Only after five, however, is the same formal construction generalized to verbs of mental state, although, again, mental verbs like *know* are part of young children's repertoire. Moreover, early uses do not accommodate the semantics of complementation – the possible discrepancy between the truth value of the complement clause and that of the sentence as a whole. Children under three cannot correctly answer the question 'What did Juan say that he drank?' – if Juan drank something different from what he said he did (de Villiers & de Villiers 2000). The semantics of complementation thus provide a window on other possible worlds, mental and communicative, in which prepositions can be true even though their complements are not. Somehow, perhaps aided by the formal features of the sentence, children must come to realize that the truth value of the preposition needs to be compound with respect to these alternatives worlds and not to the real world.

What is the common denominator of the ability to participate relevantly in a conversation, to produce and understand non-literal uses of language, to use complex sentences, and to construct more cohesive texts? They all imply *appropriateness*: a more adequate adaptation to communicative circumstances. This includes consideration of context and expression; coordination of similarities and differences; and above all, awareness of the mental state of the interlocutor. At the same time, all these abilities involve an *uncoupling* – of intention from expression, of one possible meaning from another, of the intended from the shown – which enables divergence from convention, from canonical genre, and from literal meaning. Theory of mind (ToM) provides the psychological requisite for the development of these characteristic features of later language development; literacy provides the linguistic means for realizing this psychological possibility.

### 3. How ToM relates to the central features of later language development

Young children are aware that imagination and beliefs are mental phenomena, and that mental images are distinct from objects in the physical world. But they are unable to comprehend the indirect nature of other's beliefs. This capacity seems to

emerge around age five, and it has a neural basis: people with disorders such as autism often have a lingering impairment of ToM, and patients with brain lesions can develop such an impairment as a result of their injury (Siegal & Varley 2002).

In tasks of ToM reasoning, most three-year-olds and some four-year-olds fail, but five-year-olds succeed.<sup>6</sup> Younger children's difficulties presumably stem from their regarding belief as a copy rather than a construed representation of reality (Wellman 1990). That is, they expect other people's beliefs to be faithful representations of reality, without regard to how or when these beliefs were formed. Yet understanding mental state is essential for forming interpersonal relationships, for recognizing people's motives for their behavior, and for anticipating reactions. It underpins social adaptation, sensibility to the needs of one's audience, and the awareness of shared knowledge.

Some studies (Pérez-Leroux 1998; de Villiers & de Villiers 2000) have established links between ToM and the emergence and generalization of certain linguistic elements or constructions. But even where such a link has not been experimentally tested, it is reasonable to assume such a relationship. Conversational interaction would be both a consequence and a prerequisite of ToM, since reading an interlocutor's intention is essential for carrying on a conversation guided by relevance principles. The same is true for semantics, particularly the lexical semantics of mental states. In this respect 'conceptual and linguistic development may go hand and hand' (Gopnik & Meltzoff 1997). Without an adequate lexicon it is impossible to express mental states, and without some understanding of such states the lexicon cannot be acquired. A similar case is the difficulty in generalizing the use of subjunctives to describe counterfactual states as in (4) above. What is missing is the full capacity for mental representation of non-actuality, perhaps the same skill necessary for the understanding of false beliefs. From the perspective of formal semantics, both require the ability to consider more than one possible world. Finally, syntax is also involved, in the form of the syntactic process of complementation, which allows one propositional argument to be embedded in another.

Language plays a role in the emergence of new ways of conceptualizing events, but at the same time, this cognitive development makes possible the kind of dual perspective involved in the skill discussed here: one's own mental state versus another's, true versus false beliefs. These new ways of thinking expand the repertoire of linguistic representations, and through them make possible new ways of reasoning. The language of complementation provides a new representational capacity for expressing propositional attitudes.

#### **4. How literacy affects later language development**

The term 'literacy' here refers not only to the acquisition of written language skills, but to social literacy, the process by which subjects growing up in a literate community become acquainted with the repertoire of discourse varieties that characterize that community. Literacy shapes later language development, as with age children are explored to the increasingly wide range of linguistic forms

associated with writing – not only through written texts, but also through spoken interaction (Blum-Kulka, this volume). Many of the linguistic features listed above as hallmarks of later language development are those associated with written registers.

A widely acknowledged consequence of the introduction of writing in a speech community is that it makes available a greater diversity of linguistic forms for a variety of communicative circumstances. Even when written registers are first introduced, they differ linguistically from those of the preexisting spoken registers, to ‘include greater structural and lexical elaboration and higher informational integration, coupled with a lesser degree of structural reduction and interaction’ (Biber 1995:311).

Literacy creates not only a more extensive repertoire of registers and expansion of the range of linguistic variation along several dimensions, but also broader patterns of linguistic variation. That is, literacy increases the heterogeneity of language uses, while concurrently facilitating the creation of normative standards. The evolving capacity to compare the functioning of linguistic elements in differing uses leads to a reorganization of those elements into coordinated systems (Karmiloff-Smith 1986b).

Yet another way in which writing influences language development is by its specific nature as a mode of reproduction. Writing frees language processing from the time pressures characteristic of oral language, so enabling the development of contemplative linguistic capacities – and consideration of sounds and words in isolation.

## **5. Directions for future research**

This chapter has reviewed several facets of later, school-age language development, focusing on elements that are influenced by literacy, which can thus be partly attributed to the effects of schooling. To gain a more general understanding of later language development, a cross-cultural perspective is also needed. Although the psychological underpinning of the trends described above may be a universal human endowment, the ways these features are expressed are culturally determined. In another cultures, awareness of an interlocutor’s mental state may conceivably not be expressed by conversational turns, or by more cohesive texts, but by other linguistic or extra-linguistic means.

The topic of figurative language, a crucial feature of later language development, also deserves further study, including production studies in contextualized elicitations (e.g., as part of a narrative), and by online comprehension studies (e.g., by measuring reaction time), and offline comprehension studies (e.g., by overt questioning, requesting paraphrases, etc.). And more careful control is needed of the kinds of linguistic materials that are used. Studying the developmental path of idioms, proverbs, sarcasm, metaphors, simile, jokes, riddles, and many other non-literal uses of language can provide valuable insights into a range of questions. Among these would be how children establish links between linguistic expressions and contexts; how they distinguish alternative meanings of expressions at the word



and sentence level; the role of metalinguistics in language use; the relation of lexicon to syntax, and so on. The entire domain of figurative language should be revisited from a psycholinguistic and cross-linguistic perspective, to identify the general cognitive and specific linguistic processes involved.

It is generally agreed that by age five, children have access to the vast majority of linguistic structures of their language. However, as this volume has aimed to show, the way they deploy, recruit, organize, select, and modify specific linguistic structures in different communicative circumstances continues to develop well into later childhood. As children mature, these structures show increasing appropriateness and flexibility in adapting to different situations and speakers, as well as an increasing divergence toward more open-ended options of linguistic expression.

#### Notes

Writing of the chapter was partially supported by a grant of the Spanish Ministry of Education and Science DGES B-502000-076. I am indebted to Ruth Berman for her detailed comments and invaluable insights. I alone am responsible for misinterpretation or inadequacies that remain.

1. Examining the issues from two leading journals for the years 2000-2002, I found that out of 94 main articles only 7 had subjects over the age of six, plus two note-type articles concerning older speakers and a review of a book about later language development. Of the seven articles, two dealt with the evolution of figurative language and the rest with awareness of linguistic units and with the relation of later language development to literacy. This sums up the scope of the field in a nutshell.
2. In this context, *linguistic form* is used for linguistic devices at all levels of language, from phonology to text including phonemes, syllables, free and bound morphemes, syntactic structures, and grammatical processes (Berman 1997a; Hickmann 2003). The term *function* refers to the way such forms are used to express referential content, the flow of information in extended discourse, and the many other goals of the use of language in context (Budwig 1991; Hickmann 2003).
3. Undergeneralizing is using a category word to mean only one particular object, as when a child says 'cup' to refer only to her own cup not to other; overgeneralizing is using a word too broadly, such as saying 'tree' to refer to any kind of plant.
4. The study was conducted as part of the cross-linguistic project on Developing Literacy in Different languages and Different Contexts (Ruth Berman, PI), referred to in the chapters by Jisa, by Khorounjaia & Tolchinsky, and by Wengelin & Strömqvist in this volume.
5. In American English about 5.9 non-literal expressions are uttered per speaking minute of free discourse (Pollio et al. 1997). Language addressed to children is full of figurative usages (Nippold 1991), and children's stories contain various types of verbal comparisons (Broderick 1992).
6. A typical task for evaluating ToM is the 'false belief task' (Wimmer & Perner 1983) concerning mistaken expectations, Children are shown a box used for some well-known product (say a familiar brand of candy), which turns out to contain something different, say pencils. They are then questioned about what they believed was in the box and what a friend who has not seen the unexpected content will believe is in the box. Other task are based on unseen displacement, following the same logic, aimed at exploring whether children can focus on and interpret different mental states, and what vocabulary they use to refer to them.