An Analytic Study of The Processes by Which Children Acquire Knowledge of Social / Pragmatic Elements of Language

Ching-Hsiung Lee*

ABSTRACT

This study focuses on exploring how children comprehend illocutionary forces of speech and produce the linguistically-called speech acts in their communications. Strategies for this study are collecting a great number of experiments and investigations made by the linguists of child language development and analyzing them systematically. After close analysis of varied actual language behaviors of children and linguists' studies as well, we find that all normal children follow the same route they appear to follow in the acquisition of the five types of speech acts—representatives, directives, commissives, expressives and declarations.

Then what is a pity is that up to now, we know rather less about children's expression of commissives, expressives, and declarations. It is hoped that this study can stimulate other linguists to make further suggestions in this field.

Before exploring the processes by which children acquire knowledge of social / pragmatic elements of language, let us consider first the question of how children acquire the ability to comprehend and produce language or speech. The child language development has intrigued researchers or investigators for quite a period. Especially in the 1950s and 1960s, there were a flowing stream of researches on the ways of children's utterances. This trend had a strong influence on both the kinds of data that child's language development researchers collected and the explanations which they offered for those data.

*Department of Foreign Languages and Literature
試析孩童獲得言語行為知識之過程

李慶雄

摘 要

本論文旨在探討孩童如何體會言語之非表意行為能力（illocutionary forces）及取得言語行為能力（speech acts）。經廣收諸多語言學家所做之調查與實驗之資料，詳加研判，並做有系統之剖析，結果發現一般正常孩童均循同一途徑，且按序獲得五大類的言語行為：表意行為（representatives），指向行為（directives），委託行為（commissives），表達行為（expressives），宣布行為（declarations）。

然至憾的是：迄今，吾等對孩童之此三類言語行為，知之未臻詳盡。故期望建本論文以激起其他學者專家在此方面提供更進一步之見解。

*外國語文系