

1. Record Nr.	UNINA9910782766203321
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Titolo	Meaning in the second language [[electronic resource] /] / by Roumyana Slabakova
Pubbl/distr/stampa	Berlin, : Mouton de Gruyter, c2008
ISBN	1-281-99957-1 9786611999575 3-11-021151-3
Descrizione fisica	1 online resource (340 p.)
Collana	Studies on language acquisition, , 1861-4248 ; ; 34
Classificazione	ER 925
Disciplina	401/.93
Soggetti	Grammar, Comparative and general Second language acquisition Semantics
Lingua di pubblicazione	Inglese
Formato	Materiale a stampa
Livello bibliografico	Monografia
Note generali	Description based upon print version of record.
Nota di bibliografia	Includes bibliographical references (p. [284]-321) and index.
Nota di contenuto	Frontmatter -- Table of contents -- Chapter 1. Introduction -- Chapter 2. Architecture of the language faculty -- Chapter 3. Psycholinguistic models of sentence comprehension -- Chapter 4. What are imaging and ERP studies of bilinguals really testing? -- Chapter 5. The Bottleneck Hypothesis -- Chapter 6. Evidence from behavioral studies: Simple Syntax-Complex Semantics -- Chapter 7. Evidence from behavioral studies: Complex Syntax-Simple Semantics -- Chapter 8. Implications -- Backmatter
Sommario/riassunto	This book reviews recent research on the second language acquisition of meaning with a view of establishing whether there is a critical period for the acquisition of compositional semantics. A modular approach to language architecture is assumed. The book addresses the Critical Period Hypothesis by examining the positive side of language development: it demonstrates which modules of the grammar are easy to acquire and are not subject to age effects. The Bottleneck Hypothesis is proposed, which argues that inflectional morphology and its features present the most formidable challenge, while syntax and phrasal semantics pose less difficulty to learners. Findings from the neurofunctional imaging (PET, fMRI) and electrophysiology (ERPs) of L2

comprehension are reviewed and critically examined. Since it is argued that experimental tasks in those studies are mostly in need of linguistic refinement, evidence from behavioral studies of L2 acquisition of semantics are brought to bear on comprehension modeling. Learning situations are divided into two types: those presenting learners with complex syntax, but simple semantics; and those offering complex semantic mismatches in simple syntactic contexts. The numerous studies of both types reviewed in the book indicate that there is no barrier to ultimate success in the acquisition of phrasal semantics.

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