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Sommario/riassunto

In dealing with the nature of protolanguage, an important formative

factor in its development, and one that would surely have influenced that nature, has too often been neglected: the precise circumstances under which protolanguage arose. Three factors are involved in this neglect: a failure to appreciate radical differences between the functions of language and animal communication, a failure to relate developments to the overall course of human evolution, and the supposition that protolanguage represents a package, rather than a series of separate developments that sequentially impacted the communication of pre-humans. An approach that takes these factors into account is very briefly suggested.