Ochs

Culture and Language Development

Language Acquisition and Language Socialization in a Samoan Village

As children are learning to become competent members of their society, so also are they learning to become competent speakers of their language. In other words socialisation and language acquisition take place at the same time in a child's experience. In this book, Elinor Ochs explores the complex interaction of these two processes. Focusing in particular on the experiences of children in Samoa, Ochs examines both the cognitive and socio-cultural dimensions of children's language development. She shows that language competence includes not only knowledge of grammatical principles and sentence construction but also knowledge of the norms that link language to social and cognitive context; and that local social and cultural systems as well as children's individual psychological and biological capacities, organise their understanding and production of particular language constructions. This innovative study will appeal widely to anthropologists, developmental psychologists, psycholinguistics, sociolinguistics, communication specialists and educationists interested in child development and caregiver-child communication.

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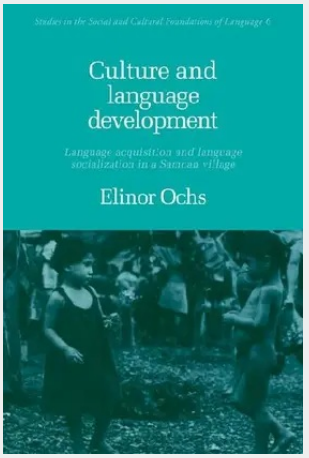

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