



# Communicating Meaning: The Evolution and Development of Language

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## **Communicating Meaning: The Evolution and Development of Language**

Dealing specifically with the origins and development of human language, this book is based on a selection of materials from a recent international conference held at the Center of Interdisciplinary Research at the University of Bielefeld in Germany. The significance of the volume is that it testifies to paradigmatic changes currently in progress. The changes are from the typical emphasis on the syntactic properties of language and cognition to an analysis of biological and cultural factors which make these formal properties possible.

The chapters provide in-depth coverage of such topics as new theoretical foundations for cognitive research, phylogenetic prerequisites and ontogenesis of language, and environmental and cultural forces of development. Some of the arguments and lines of research are relatively well-known; others deal with completely new interdisciplinary approaches. As a result, some of the authors' conclusions are in part, rather counterintuitive, such as the hypothesis that language as a system of formal symbolic transformations may be in fact a very late phenomenon located in the sphere of socio-cultural and not biological development. While highly debatable, this and other hypotheses of the book may well define research questions for the future.

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