

Abstract
Is SLI a language learning impairment?
Dorothy Bishop

Language is usually acquired so naturally and automatically that it is surprising to find that some children find the process difficult. A long tradition of developmental psycholinguistics has viewed language acquisition as distinct from other types of learning, but this view has been challenged by recent research. I shall discuss how neuropsychological models that distinguish between different aspects of learning can be applied to understand deficits in children with specific language impairment. The distinction between procedural and declarative learning has been fruitful in stimulating research in this area, and has demonstrated learning difficulties in SLI that extend beyond language. Implications of these findings for therapy will be discussed.