**Ministry of Higher Education and Scientific Research**

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**College of Arts & Humanities**

**Department of English Language**

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**Linguistics**

**The Study of Language**

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**Lesson Three**

**The tool-making source**

**In the physical adaptation view, one function (producing speech sounds) must have been superimposed on existing anatomical features (teeth, lips) previously used for other purposes (chewing, sucking). A similar development is believed to have taken place with human hands and some believe that manual gestures may have been a precursor of language. By about two million years ago, there is evidence that humans had developed preferential right-handedness and had become capable of making stone tools. Wood tools and composite tools eventually followed. Tool-making, or the outcome of manipulating objects and changing them using both hands, is evidence of a brain at work . It may be that there was an evolutionary connection between the language-using and tool-using abilities of humans and that both were involved in the development of the speaking brain.**

**This activity may indeed have been a crucial stage in the development of language, but what it lacks is any structural organization. All languages, including sign language, require the organizing and combining of sounds or signs in specific arrangements.**

**The genetic source**

**We can think of the human baby in its first few years as a living example of some of these physical changes taking place. At birth, the baby's brain is only a quarter of its eventual weight and the larynx is much higher in the throat, allowing babies to breathe and drink at the same time. In a relatively short period of time, the larynx descends, the brain develops, the child assumes an upright posture and starts walking and talking.**

**This almost automatic set of developments and the complexity of the young child's language have led some scholars to look for something more powerful than small physical adaptations of the species over time as the source of language.. This seems to indicate that human offspring are born with a special capacity for language. It is innate, no other creature seems to have it, and it is not tied to a specific variety of language.**