Comparative psychology and the great apes: Their competency in learning, language, and numbers.

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AB Provides an overview of comparative studies with primates conducted over the past 30 yrs, and emphasizes the substantial progress made in this field. Brain complexity among the primates and their ability to generalize learning to an advantage to new situations are discussed. Apes’ competencies for language are described in the context of the Language Analogue project (D. M. Rumbaugh, 1977), whose purpose is to develop a computer-based language-training situation to use in research into language-relevant accomplishments of chimpanzees. Competencies that primates have for learning numbers, and for use of protoarithmetic and arithmetic processes, are also addressed. The relevance of comparative research to adult competencies is stressed.