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习Students should be jealous. Not only do babies get to doze their days away, but they've also mastered the fine art of learning in their sleep. By the time babies are a year old they can recognize a lot of sounds and even simple words. Marie Cheour at the university of Turku in Finland suspected that they might progress this fast because they learn language while they sleep as well as when they are awake. To test the theory, Cheour and their colleagues studied 45 newborn babies in the first days of their lives. They exposed all the infants to an hour of Finnish vowel sounds one that sounds like "oo", another like "ee" and a third boundary vowel peculiar to Finnish and similar languages that sounds like something in between. EEG recording of the infants brains before and after the session showed that the newborns could not distinguish the sounds. Fifteen of the babies then went back with their mothers, while the rest were split into two sleep-study groups. One group was exposed throughout their night-time sleeping hours to the same three vowels, while the others listened to the other, easier-to-distinguish vowel sounds. When tested in the morning, and again in the evening, the babies who had heard the tricky boundary vowels all night showed brainwave activity indicating that they could now recognize this sound. They could identify the sound even when its pitch was changed, while none of the other babies could pick up the boundary

vowel at all. Cheour doesn't know how babies accomplish this nighttime learning, but she suspects that the special ability might indicate that unlike adults, babies don't "turn off" their cerebral cortex while they sleep. The skill probably fades in the course of the first years of life, she adds so forget the idea that you can pick up the tricky French vowels as an adult just by slipping a language tape under your pillow. But while it may not help grown-ups, Cheour is hoping to use the sleeping hours to give remedial help to babies who are genetically at risk of language disorders. 学生们应该感到嫉妒。婴儿们不仅整天睡觉，而且他们还能在睡眠中掌握学习的艺术。当婴儿一周岁时他们可以识别出很多声音，甚至简单的单词。芬兰Turku大学的Marie Cheour怀疑他们进步这么快的原因可能是不但在醒着时而且在睡觉时也在学语言。为了检验这个理论，Cheour和她的同事们在45个新生儿生命最初的几天里对他们进行了研究。他们让所有的婴儿听一个小时的芬兰元音其中一个类似“oo”，另一个类似“ee”，还有一个芬兰语和类似语言特有的边界音，听起来像两者之间的声音。在此之前和之后的婴儿大脑的电脑图记录显示新生儿不能辨别这几个声音。然后，其中15个婴儿随他们的母亲回去了，而另外的婴儿被分成两个睡觉时学习小组。一个组的婴儿夜间睡觉的时候还放着同三个元音的录音，而其他的婴儿只听其他的较容易区分的元音。在早晚各进行了测试之后，那些整晚都在听难识别的边界音的婴儿显示出的脑波活动说明他们现在能够识别这个新声音了。甚至当这个音的音调变化时他们仍能够识别出来，而其他的婴儿没有一个能识别这个边界音。Cheour不知道婴儿是如何完成这个夜间学习的，

但是她怀疑这种特殊能力说明跟大人不一样，婴儿睡觉时没有把大脑皮层“关掉”。她接着说，这种技能可能在生命的最初过程中渐渐消失，因此应忘掉这样一个想法，即：你作为一个成年人只需要把一盘语言录音带塞在枕头下面就可以学会法语中一些麻烦的音。但是，虽然这并不能帮助成年人，Cheour希望这些睡眠时间可用来帮助那些从基因上来说会发生语言障碍的婴儿。

- 1).Babies can learn language even in their sleep.-R
- 2).An infant can recognize a lot of vowels by the time he or she is a year old.-N
- 3).Finish vowels are easy to distinguish.-N
- 4).The three vowels mentioned in this article are all Finnish sounds.- R
- 5).The study shows that the infant ' s cerebral cortex is working while he is asleep.-R
- 6).If an adult wants to learn a language faster, he can put a language tape under his pillow.-W
- 7).Cheour ' s finding is worthless.-W

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