



Linguistics and Morphology

سری کتابهای کمک آموزشی کارشناسی ارشد

مجموعه مترجمی زبان انگلیسی

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سخن ناشر

«ن والقلم و ما یسطرون»

کلمه نزد خدا بود و خدا آن را با قلم بر ما نازل کرد.

به پاس تشکر از چنین موهبت الهی، موسسه ماهان درصدد برآمده است تا در راستای انتقال دانش و مفاهیم با کمک اساتید مجرب و مجموعه کتب آموزشی خود برای شما داوطلبان ادامه تحصیل در مقطع کارشناسی ارشد گام موثری بردارد. امید است تلاش‌های خدمتگزاران شما در این موسسه پایه‌گذار گام‌های بلند فردای شما باشد. مجموعه کتاب‌های کمک آموزشی ماهان به‌منظور استفاده داوطلبان کنکور کارشناسی ارشد سراسری و آزاد تالیف شده‌اند. در این کتاب‌ها سعی کرده‌ایم با بهره‌گیری از تجربه اساتید بزرگ و کتب معتبر داوطلبان را از مطالعه کتاب‌های متعدد در هر درس بی‌نیاز کنیم.

دیگر تالیفات ماهان برای سایر دانشجویان به‌صورت ذیل می‌باشد.

● **مجموعه کتاب‌های ۸ آزمون:** شامل ۵ مرحله کنکور کارشناسی ارشد ۵ سال اخیر به همراه ۳ مرحله آزمون تالیفی ماهان همراه با پاسخ تشریحی می‌باشد که برای آشنایی با نمونه سوالات کنکور طراحی شده است. این مجموعه کتاب‌ها با توجه به تحلیل ۳ ساله اخیر کنکور و بودجه‌بندی مباحث در هریک از دروس، اطلاعات مناسبی جهت برنامه‌ریزی درسی در اختیار دانشجو قرار می‌دهد.

● **مجموعه کتاب‌های کوچک:** شامل کلیه نکات کاربردی در گرایش‌های مختلف کنکور کارشناسی ارشد می‌باشد که برای دانشجویان جهت جمع‌بندی مباحث در ۲ ماهه آخر قبل از کنکور مفید می‌باشد. بدین‌وسیله از مجموعه اساتید، مولفان و همکاران محترم خانواده بزرگ ماهان که در تولید و به‌روزرسانی تالیفات ماهان نقش موثری داشته‌اند، صمیمانه تقدیر و تشکر می‌نماییم. دانشجویان عزیز و اساتید محترم می‌توانند هرگونه انتقاد و پیشنهاد درخصوص تالیفات ماهان را از طریق سایت ماهان به آدرس mahan.ac.ir با ما در میان بگذارند.

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برخلاف کتاب‌های موجود در بازار که تست - محور هستند، رویکرد کتاب حاضر در وهله اول شرح کامل درس است. این توضیحات از روی منابع اصلی این درس و براساس مباحث پرتکرار و اصلی کنکور در ۱۵ سال اخیر ارائه شده‌اند. در انتهای هر فصل تعدادی سوال تالیفی به‌همراه پاسخ تشریحی با توجه به حجم مطالب قرار داده شده که به داوطلبان کمک می‌کند میزان یادگیری خود را بسنجند. پس از این بخش ابتدا سوالات دانشگاه سراسری و سپس سوالات دانشگاه آزاد آورده شده تا داوطلبان با نوع سوالات و نکاتی که در این سال‌ها مورد توجه طراحان بوده بیشتر آشنا شوند.

چیدمان و حجم مطالب ارائه‌شده در هر فصل عمدتاً براساس کتاب Yule است. اما با توجه به اینکه در سال‌های اخیر سوالاتی از کتاب Fromkin طراحی شده است، گروه مولفان در حد نیاز از مطالب این کتاب هم استفاده کرده است. به‌عنوان نمونه، در درس زبان‌شناسی سوالات ۲۱۱ تا ۲۱۴ کنکور ۹۱ و در درس واژه‌شناسی سوالات ۲۳۱، ۲۳۳ و ۲۳۵ سال ۹۳ از این کتاب طرح شده‌اند. اگرچه این کتاب می‌تواند پاسخگوی نیاز داوطلبان در درس واژه‌شناسی هم می‌باشد، اما اکیدا توصیه می‌شود فصل Morphology از کتاب Fromkin و فصل Word Formation Processes از کتاب Yule جهت مشاهده مثال‌های بیشتر مطالعه شوند.

همچنین با بررسی تعداد سوالاتی که از هر سرفصل در سال‌های اخیر طراحی شده است می‌توان ادعا کرد به‌ترتیب فصل‌های Semantics و Syntax بیشترین اهمیت و فصل‌های Language And Origins Of Language و Regional Variation کمترین اهمیت را دارند.

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Chapter 1

Basics of Linguistics

- ◆ **Introduction to Linguistics**
- ◆ **Linguistics**
- ◆ **Sign in Language**
- ◆ **Linguistic Knowledge and Performance**
- ◆ **Components of Linguistic Knowledge**

Basics of Linguistics

1. INTRODUCTION TO LINGUISTICS

When you know a language, you can speak and be understood by others who know that language. This means you have the capacity to produce sounds that signify certain meanings and to understand or interpret the sounds produced by others. But language is much more than speech. Deaf people produce and understand sign languages just as hearing persons produce and understand spoken languages. The languages of the deaf communities throughout the world are equivalent to spoken languages, differing only in their modality of expression.

Most everyone knows at least one language. Five-year-old children are nearly as proficient at speaking and understanding as their parents. Yet the ability to carry out the simplest conversation requires profound knowledge that most speakers are unaware of. This is true for speakers of all languages, from Albanian to Zulu. A speaker of English can produce a sentence having two relative clauses without knowing what a relative clause is, such as *My goddaughter who was born in Sweden and who now lives in Iowa is named Disa, after a Viking queen.*

In a parallel fashion, a child can walk without understanding or being able to explain the principles of balance and support or the neurophysiological control mechanisms that permit one to do so. The fact that we may know something unconsciously is not unique to language.

2. LINGUISTICS

Our everyday encounters with language are so natural and so extensive that we rarely consider language as anything of special importance to require studying. However, investigations of human language demonstrate that a language is an extremely complex, highly abstract, and infinitely productive system that links meanings with sounds. We all know the system of our native language, but this knowledge, although constantly in use, is not conscious.

The goal of **linguistics** – the scientific study of language – is to describe languages and to explain the unconscious knowledge all speakers have of their language. Therefore, *observation* and *description* are the two main activities of linguists, not the only ones, though. On the other hand, linguists are not the only scholars that are concerned with the study of language. In many other fields, an understanding of language is highly important. In studying language, educators, philosophers, psychologists, neurologists, anthropologists, and students of literature all find important insights into their own areas of specialization. Understanding language as a complicated system contributes to understanding human mind and how this complicated system,

language, is organized in and acquired by human brain; that is, what makes human different from other creatures.

Naturally, concern with language is not new. From the earliest recorded history, there is evidence that people investigated language. Many of the assumptions, theories, and goals of modern linguistics find their origin in the past centuries. In addition, nonlinguistic studies of the language have also been influenced by the ideas of the past, as have the views about language held by many people in the society. A brief overview of linguistic studies provides a base for understanding the contributions of the past, as well as the misconceptions about language that developed in earlier times and have continued among all humans until today.

3. SIGN IN LANGUAGE

Saussure introduced language as a system of signs. He believes that each sign contains two parts (a) Signifier (signifiant) and (b) Signified (signifié). These two parts cannot be divided as they are like two faces of a coin. There are three types of signs.



Iconic: a sign whose form has actual characteristics of its meanings. For example the sign shown on the left, means man. Its meaning is so obvious because the sign has the actual characteristics of the meaning.



Indexical: a sign whose form has characteristics which are only associated in nature with its meaning. For example, skull and crossed bones mean 'poison'. Let's consider the indexical nature of this signs. When you see this sign on a barrel of gunpowder, you can *infer* that if it explodes, you will die and in a few months you will look like this.



Symbol is a sign whose form is arbitrarily or conventionally associated with its meaning. For example, the symbol on the left, which is a cuneiform writing symbol, has no relationship with its meaning 'God/ heaven'. In fact, nothing in nature associates this word with this meaning.

4. LINGUISTIC KNOWLEDGE AND PERFORMANCE

Our linguistic knowledge permits us to form longer and longer sentences by joining sentences and phrases together or adding modifiers to a noun. Whether we stop at three, five, or eighteen adjectives, it is impossible to limit the number we could add if desired. Very long sentences are theoretically possible, but they are highly improbable. Evidently, there is a difference between having the knowledge necessary to produce sentences of a language and applying this knowledge. It is a difference between *linguistic competence* and *linguistic performance*. **Linguistic competence** is the unconscious knowledge about sounds, meanings, and syntax possessed by the speakers of a language. Therefore, linguistic competence is a mental concept and not directly observable. **Linguistic performance** is the actual use of linguistic competence in the production and comprehension of language.

5. COMPONENTS OF LINGUISTIC KNOWLEDGE

What constitutes our unconscious knowledge of language? Speakers of language have at least three types of knowledge as components of their linguistic competence, i.e. knowledge of sounds, knowledge of words and knowledge of sentence from non-sentence.

5.1. Knowledge of the Sound System

This type of knowledge consists of phonetics and phonology. **Phonetics** is knowing what sounds are in a language and what sounds are not, and how these sounds are produced. One way this unconscious knowledge is revealed is by the way speakers of one language pronounce words from another language. French people speaking English often pronounce words like *this* and *that* as if they were spelled *zis* and *zat*.

Besides knowing the list of inventory of sounds, we know which sounds may start a word, end a word, and follow each other; this is phonology. **Phonology** could be defined as the way speech sounds form patterns. For example, English speakers pronounce the name *Nkrumah* either as *Nekrumah* or *Enkrumah* because no word in English begins with the *nk* sound.

5.2. Knowledge of Word

Knowledge of the sound system of the language is only one part of linguistic knowledge that speakers of a language have. Native speakers of a language also know that certain strings of sounds stand for certain concepts or meanings. Speakers of English know what *boy* means, and that it is different from *girl*. Technically speaking, this substructure is called **morphology** which concerns the classes of morphemes, and their co-occurrence in sentences and combination as words. *Morphological rules* express the possible combination of morphemes as words. For example, [dɒg] combines with [z] to yield [dɒgz] while [kæt] combines with [s] to yield [kæts].

5.3. Knowledge of Sentence and Non-sentence

Memorization and storage of an infinite set of sentences would require an infinite storage capacity. However, the brain is finite, and even if it were not, we could not store novel sentences. When you learn a language you must learn something finite and that can be stored. If putting one word after another in any order always formed sentences, then language could simply be a set of words. However, words are not enough and that is why we reject the following as unacceptable:

- *What are drinking and go home?¹
- *Lost Sally security blanket his.
- *What he thought was want a sports car.

Therefore in addition to knowing the words of the language, linguistic knowledge includes rules for forming sentences, called knowledge of syntax, i.e. the ability to distinguish grammatical sentences from ungrammatical ones. **Syntax** concerns the combinations of words as phrases and of phrases as sentence. Every language has words, which combine as phrases and sentences. The possibilities of combination are strictly limited, so every language has syntax or sentence structure. *Syntactic rules* specify the possible combinations of words as phrases and as sentences of general types, such as affirmative, statements, etc.

¹ The symbol * means that the sentence is syntactically or semantically unacceptable.

Practice Questions chapter 1

1- Chomsky believes that the main subject of linguistics is

- | | |
|---------------------------|--------------------------|
| 1) linguistic performance | 2) linguistic competence |
| 3) spoken language | 4) written language |

2- When a woman sees a thief, she might get shocked and due to this she might not be able to call for help or utter any words at that moment but after some minutes she becomes well and starts to speak. In which subject she suffered a defect?

- | | |
|--|---------------------------|
| 1) Grammatical performance of language | 2) Linguistic competence |
| 3) Applied competence of language | 4) Linguistic performance |

3- A skull and crossed bones traditionally mean poison. This sign is an example of

- | | | | |
|-----------|----------|---------|---------|
| 1) symbol | 2) index | 3) icon | 4) logo |
|-----------|----------|---------|---------|

4- is based on a theory of what every speaker of a language unconsciously knows about the sound patterns of that language.

- | | | | |
|-----------------|--------------|---------------|--------------|
| 1) Phonotactics | 2) Phonology | 3) Morphology | 4) Phonetics |
|-----------------|--------------|---------------|--------------|

Practice Answer key chapter 1

1- Choice 2

☞ Chomsky believes that the main subject of linguistics is the study of linguistic competence.

2- Choice 4

☞ Performance is the ability to talk and utter the language.

3- Choice 2

☞ Index is a sign whose form has characteristics which are only associated in nature with its meaning

4- Choice 2

☞ Phonology could be defined as the way speech sounds form patterns.

Public University Multiple Choice Chapter 1

- 1- The philosopher uses linguistic insights to find out the relationship between** (State University, 83)
- 1) language and logic
2) language and society
3) language and culture
4) language acquisition and learning
- 2- Complete the following sentence with one of the choices:**
- Descriptive linguistics** (State University, 83)
- 1) contains the regulative rules of the competence
2) contains rules of what the language should be
3) describes the regulative rules in the language
4) describes the knowledge that underlines language use
- 3- Complete the following sentence with one of the choices: Language is** (State University, 83)
- 1) an extremely complex and infinitely productive communication
2) a highly abstract knowledge which enables us to speak, read and write
3) the body of knowledge which links meaning with reading and writing
4) a complex, abstract and productive system which links meaning with sound
- 4- The perception and production of speech is called** (State University, 84)
- 1) performance
2) competence
3) comprehensible input
4) conventional knowledge
- 5- Competence is** (State University, 85)
- 1) a set of rules about grammar
2) the body of linguistic knowledge
3) the grammatical patterns of a language
4) the unconscious use of sounds and meanings
- 6- Performance is** (State University, 85)
- 1) a representation of human communications in its abstract form
2) the unconscious knowledge about sounds, meanings, and syntax
3) the use of languages in daily life
4) the actual language competence
- 7- Performance is** (State University, 90)
- 1) the use of language in daily life
2) the actual language competence
3) the unconscious knowledge about sounds, meaning, and syntax
4) a representation of human communication in its abstract form
- 8- Competence is** (State University, 91)
- 1) the grammar of a language
2) a set of rules about grammar
3) the body of linguistic knowledge
4) the unconscious use of sounds and meanings

Public University Explanatory Answer Key Chapter 1

1- Choice 1

☞ In studying language, educators, philosophers, psychologists, anthropologists, and students of literature all find important insights into their own areas of specialization. Philosophers find in language one of the chief factors that distinguishes man from other animals. Also they are interested in determining the relationships between language and logic and between language and thought.

2- Choice 4

☞ Descriptive linguists are interested in and attempt to describe the regular structures of the language as it is used.

3- Choice 4

☞ A language is an extremely complex, highly abstract, and infinitely productive system that links meanings with sounds.

4- Choice 1

☞ Competence is the linguistic knowledge that native speakers have of the language; i.e. the phonological, morphological, syntactic and semantic knowledge of the language. Performance, however, is actual linguistic behavior of particular individuals on particular occasions.

5- Choice 2

6- Choice 4

7- Choice 2

8- Choice 3

☞ Linguistic competence is the system of linguistic knowledge possessed by native speakers of a language, it is in contrast to the concept of linguistic competence, the way the language system is used in communication. The concept was first introduced by Chomsky.

Azad University Multiple Choice Chapter 1

1- Who suggested the following dichotomies as theoretical means to analyze language as a semiotic system? “Langue/Parole”, “Signifiant/ Signifie” (Azad University, 88)

- 1) Chomsky 2) Bloomfield 3) Jacobson 4) Saussure

2- The term refers to using linguistic knowledge in actual speech production and comprehension. (Azad University, 88)

- 1) competence 2) I-language 3) performance 4) pragmatics

Azad University Explanatory Answer Key Chapter 1

1- Choice 4

☞ These terms were defined by Saussure as follows:

Langue: the abstract, systematic rules and conventions of a signifying system.

Parole: the concrete instances of the use of *langue*.

Signifier (*signifiant*): the form which a sign takes.

Signified (*signifié*): the concept a sign represents.

2- Choice 3

Chapter 2

The Origins of Language

- ◆ **The Divine Source**
- ◆ **The Natural-sound Source**
- ◆ **The Oral-gesture Source**
- ◆ **Glossogenetics**

The Origins of Language

One of the most disputable issues concerning language is the origin of language itself. We know that spoken language developed well before written language. However, how language originated remains a speculation. When we uncover the traces of human life on earth dating back half a million years ago, we never find any direct evidence relating to the speech of humans to tell us how language was back in early stages. Perhaps because of this lack of direct physical evidence, there have been so many different speculations about the origins of human speech, the most important of which are as follows:

1. THE DIVINE SOURCE

In most religions, there appears to be a divine source that provides humans with language. According to one view, God created Adam and *whatsoever Adam called every living creature, that was the name thereof*.

In an attempt to rediscover this original, divine language, a few experiments have been carried out, with rather conflicting results. The basic idea has been that, if infants were allowed to grow up without hearing any language, then they would spontaneously begin using the original God-given language. However, except for two rather controversial cases, the majority of children who have been discovered living in isolation, without any contact with human speech, show no sign of 'the divine language'.

2. THE NATURAL-SOUND SOURCE

A different view about the sources of language is based on the concept of 'natural sounds'. The suggestion is that primitive words could have been imitations of the natural sounds which early men heard around them. For example, when they heard a bird fly by making a *CAWCAW* sound, the early humans imitated the sound and used it to refer to that bird. The fact that all modern languages have **onomatopoeic words** (i.e. words with pronunciations that seem to 'echo' natural sounds) could be good proof to support this theory. In English, for example, there are words like *splash, bang, boom, screech*, and forms like *bow-wow*. For this reason, this view is called the **bow-wow theory** of language origin. Although these kinds of words exist in any language, they cannot explain how so many other soundless, abstract entities in our world could have been referred to with the help of the words that only echoed natural sounds.

It has also been suggested that the original sounds of language might have come from natural cries of emotion, such as pain, anger, and joy. So, the word *OUCH*, for example, had painful connotations. However, these interjections in languages that are produced with sudden intakes of breath like *Ah!*, *Hey!*, *Wow!*, *Yuck!* are just expressive noises people make in emotional reactions and contain sounds that are not otherwise used in their language, and don't seem to be good candidates as source sounds. This theory is known as **pooh-pooh theory**.

One other suggestion about natural sounds is known as the **yo-heave-ho theory**. The idea suggested is that the sounds of a person involved in physical efforts could have been the source of language, especially when the effort involved several people and had to be coordinated. For example, a group of early men might have developed a set of grunts, groans, and swear words which they used when lifting and carrying logs of trees or bodies of mammoths. What is appealing in this theory is that it places the development of language in some social context. However, it cannot answer the questions regarding the origins of human language. Apes and other primates have grunts and social calls, too, but they don't seem to have developed the capacity for speech.

3. THE ORAL-GESTURE SOURCE

One suggestion regarding the origins of language sounds considers a link between physical gestures and orally produced sounds. It seems reasonable that physical gestures, involving the whole body, could have been a means of indicating a wide range of emotions and intentions since many of the physical gestures, using hands, face, and body are a means of non-verbal communication still used by humans today. The theory claims that first a set of physical gestures was developed, and then a set of oral gestures involving the mouth, developed in which the movements of the tongue, lips, and so on were based on patterns similar to physical gestures. Imagine a specialized pantomime of the tongue in a 'goodbye' message representing the waving of the hand or arm.

4. GLOSSOGENETICS

This quite different speculation focuses mainly on the biological basis of the formation and development of human language along with the physical development of humans not shared by any other creatures. At some early stage, our human ancestors made a transition to an upright position, walking on two legs and assigning some revised roles for the front limbs (hands). In this revolutionary development, there are some certain features thought to be adaptations that appear to be relevant for speech. These features themselves do not lead to speech production, but having them gives human the capacity for speech.

There appears to be physiological adaptation in human distinguishing him from other animals. Human **teeth** are upright not slanting like those of apes. This feature is not only needed for eating, but it helps the production of sounds like *f*, *v*, *th*. Human **lips** have much more intricate muscles joint together, so their resulting flexibility helps the production of sounds like *p*, *b*, and *w*. The human **mouth** is relatively small, can be opened and closed rapidly, and contains a very flexible **tongue** which can be used to shape a wide variety of sounds. On the other hand, the human **larynx**, or the 'voice box', is quite different from those of other animals since the upright posture of human body has moved the head forward and the larynx lower, which has helped the

easier and faster flow of air through larynx and **vocal cords** on top of the larynx to facilitate the production of different sounds. It has also created a long cavity called the **pharynx**, above the vocal cords, which can act as a resonator for any sounds produced via larynx. Above all is the human **brain**. Human brain is lateralized; that is, it has specialized functions in each of the two hemispheres. The functions that are analytic, such as **tool-using** and language, are largely dealt with in the left hemisphere of the brain for most humans. The organization of different activities, especially language, in human brain gives human the incredible ability to think and speak, which distinguishes him from other species.

All of the sounds and gestures used by human beings seem to characterize only one of the functions of language, i.e. the **interactional function**, which deals with how we humans use language to interact with each other, socially and/or emotionally; how we indicate friendliness, anger, pain, pleasure, sympathy, etc. Yet, there's another major function of language, the **transactional function**, whereby humans use their linguistic ability to communicate knowledge, skills and information. The transactional function must have developed, in part, for the transfer of knowledge from one generation to the next.

Practice Questions chapter 2

1- Words that sound similar to the noises they describe are examples of and they are closely related to theory.

- | | |
|-------------------------------------|---------------------------------|
| 1) cuneiforms, yo-heave-ho theory | 2) allophones, pooh-pooh theory |
| 3) onomatopoeia, yo-heave-ho theory | 4) onomatopoeia, bow-wow theory |

2- The appeal of is that it places the development of human language in a social context.

- | | |
|---------------------|--------------------|
| 1) bow-bow theory | 2) yo-he-ho theory |
| 3) pooh-pooh theory | 4) ta-ta theory |

3- A set of grunts and groans and swear words was developed in human speech, according to the source view.

- | | | | |
|-----------|------------------|-----------------|------------------|
| 1) divine | 2) natural-sound | 3) oral-gesture | 4) echoing-sound |
|-----------|------------------|-----------------|------------------|

4- With which of the sources of language development do you associate the following quotation? "Chewing, licking and sucking are extremely widespread mammalian activities, which, in terms of casual observation, have obvious similarities with speech."

- | | |
|------------------------|------------------|
| 1) Genetic | 2) Tool making |
| 3) Physical adaptation | 4) Divine source |

Practice Answer key chapter 2

1- Choice 4

☞ Onomatopoeic words such as splash, bang, boom, boom that seem to echo naturally occurring sounds have been used to support "bow-bow theory".

2- Choice 2

☞ Pooh-pooh theory: language started with grunts, groans and cries of pain or pleasure.

3- Choice 2

☞ A set of grunts and groans and swear words was developed in human speech, according to the natural sound source view.

4- Choice 1

☞ Chewing, licking and sucking are activities which need not be learnt but which are done spontaneously by mammals, i.e. we can say that these activities are part of our genetic pattern.

Azad University Multiple Choice Chapter 2

1- Which of the following items represents the idea that the beginning of human speech is based on the concept of natural sounds? (Azad University, 89)

- | | |
|----------------------------|-----------------------------|
| 1) The oral-gesture source | 2) The natural-sound source |
| 3) The divine source | 4) The glossogenetics |

Azad University Explanatory Answer Key Chapter 2

1- Choice 2

☞ The concept of 'natural sounds' suggests that primitive words could have been imitations of the natural sounds which early men heard around them.

Chapter 3

The Properties of Language

- ◆ **Unique Properties**
- ◆ **Other Properties**

The Properties of Language

In this section, we are concentrating on properties which differentiate human language from all other forms of signaling and make it a unique system of communication. In order to describe those properties, first we should make a distinction between two different types of signals: **communicative** signals that are meant to communicate something intentionally, and **informative** signals which may be unintentionally conveying some information. For example, a person listening to you may note that you have a cold (you sneezed or coughed), or that you are from some other part of the country or you are a foreigner (you have a strong accent). This way, you have been unintentionally informative. However when you use language to tell this person, “I would like to apply for the vacant position,” you are normally considered to be intentionally communicating something.

1. UNIQUE PROPERTIES

There have been a number of attempts to determine the defining properties of human language, and different lists of features can be found, six of which are definitive and are not likely to be found in the other communication systems.

1.1. Displacement

Animal communication is almost exclusively designed for this moment, here, and now. It can not effectively be used to relate events which are far removed in time and place. When your kitten says *meow*, you only understand it as something related to that immediate time and place, not conveying anything about past and future, or any other places. However, humans are perfectly capable of producing messages referring to past and future time, and to other locations. This property of human language is called **displacement**. It allows the users to talk about things and events not present in the immediate environment. This is a property that animal communication is considered to lack, or to have just to a limited degree.

The factors involved in the property of displacement, as manifested in human language, are much more comprehensive than the communication of a single location or a particular time. It enables us to talk about things and places whose existence we can not be sure of. We can refer to mythical creatures, demons, fairies, angels, and recently invented characters such as Superman, Batman, etc. It is the property of displacement that allows human to talk about unreal situations, or their wishes, or to describe possible future world.

1.2. Arbitrariness

There is generally no ‘natural’ or ‘iconic’ connection between a linguistic form and its meaning. For example, you can see no connection between the word *dog* in English or *perro* in Spanish and the four-legged barking animal in the world. So, it seems that one property of linguistic signs is their arbitrary relationship with the objects they are used to indicate. The forms of human language demonstrate a property called **arbitrariness**.

↳ **Note:** There is an exception to the arbitrariness property of human language. There are some words which are iconic signs, termed **mimetic words** (also called **onomatopoeic words**). Mimetic words sound like what they mean, for example, *bow-wow*, *tick-tock*, and *bam*. These words seem to echo the sounds of objects or activities and hence seem to have a non-arbitrary connection.

1.3. Productivity

A feature of all languages is that novel utterances can continually be created and used in them. Children are especially active in producing utterances which they have never heard before. With adults, new situations arise or new objects have to be described, so the language users use their linguistic resources to produce new expressions and new sentences. This property of human language is called **productivity**, which means **creativity** or **open-endedness**. It is related to the fact that the potential number of utterances in any human language is infinite.

↳ **Note:** On the other hand, it seems impossible for animals to produce “new” signals to communicate novel experiences or events. The problem seems to be that animal signals have a feature called **fixed reference**. Each signal is fixed as relating to a particular object or occasion. These signals cannot be manipulated; for example, they are not combined to refer to other objects or occasions

1.4. Cultural Transmission

An interesting feature of language is that it is not inherited the way we may inherit the color of our hair or our eyes from our parents. We humans acquire a language in a culture with other speakers and not from parental genes, as opposed to animals whose general pattern of communication is in the form of signals that are instinctive and not learned. An infant born to Japanese parents (who have never left Japan and speak only Japanese), who is adopted and brought up from birth by English speakers in the United States, may have physical characteristics inherited from its natural parents, but it will inevitably speak English not Japanese.

This process whereby language is passed on from one generation to the next is called **cultural transmission**. Though it is believed that humans are born with an innate ability to acquire language, it is clear that they are not born with the ability to produce utterances in a specific language, such as English. Human infants, growing up in isolation, produce no ‘instinctive’ language. Cultural transmission of a specific language is crucial in the human acquisition process.

↳ **Note:** Cultural transmission is in contrast with **innateness** of the signs of animal language. The general pattern of animal communication is that the signals used are instinctive and not learned.

1.5. Discreteness

The sounds used in language are meaningfully distinct. For example, the difference between a *b* sound and a *p* sound is not very great, but when these sounds are part of a language like English,

they are used in such a way that the occurrence of one rather than the other is meaningful. As we see that the pronunciation of the forms *pack* and *back* leads to different meanings only due to the use of distinct sounds *p* and *b* in English. This property of language is described as **discreteness**.

1.6. Duality

Language is at the same time organized at two levels or layers. This property of language is called **duality**, or **double articulation**. In terms of speech production, we have the physical level at which we can produce individual sounds, like *g*, *b*, and *a*. As individual sounds, none of these forms has any intrinsic meaning. When we produce these sounds in a particular combination like *bag*, we have another level of producing a meaning which is different from the meaning of the combination in *gab*. So, at one level, we have distinct sounds, and at another level, we have distinct meanings. This duality of level is, in fact, one of the most “economical features” of human language, since with a limited set of distinct sounds we are capable of producing a very large number of sound combinations (e.g. words) which are distinct in meaning, a feature that is not seen in animals.

2. OTHER PROPERTIES

The six properties mentioned above are considered as the core features of human language. Human language does of course have other properties that are not uniquely human characteristics. These properties are shared with animal languages.

2.1. Vocal-auditory Channel

The use of **vocal-auditory channel** is certainly a feature of human speech. The speech sounds are articulated via the vocal organs and perceived via the ears. Many other species (e.g. dolphins) use the vocal-auditory channel. Thus, this property is not a defining feature of human language.

2.2. Reciprocity

It is a feature that shows communication process is always two ways; any speaker (the sender of the linguistic signal) can also be a listener (receiver). This is also seen in other means of communication and also in other species.

2.3. Specialization

Linguistic signals do not normally serve any other type of purpose, such as breathing or feeding, etc. They are particularly used for communication.

2.4. Non-directionality

Linguistic signals can be picked up by any one within hearing, even unseen. This is what we also see in animals.

2.5. Rapid fade (or transitoriness)

Linguistic signals are produced and disappear quickly. This is specially the feature of the spoken language, but not of course the written one.

Practice Questions chapter 3

1- According to the property of there is no natural connection between a linguistic form and its meaning.

- 1) displacement 2) discreteness 3) creativity 4) arbitrariness

2- One of the properties of human language is its which accounts for the fact that we can think and talk about languages itself.

- 1) reflexiveness 2) innateness 3) duality 4) arbitrariness

3- The matter of “intentionality” deals with giving out a/an signal and signals are potential carriers of information.

- 1) informative-communicative 2) communicative-informative
3) communicative-communicative 4) informative-informative

4- Certainly, human language capacity of is at odds with in animal languages.

- 1) open-endedness, innateness 2) close-endedness, open-endedness
3) fixed reference, close-endedness 4) open-endedness, fixed reference

5- Linguistic signals are produced and disappear quickly this is the feature of

- 1) reciprocity, human language 2) non-directionality, human and animal language
3) transitoriness, human and animal language 4) rapid fade, human language

6- Take a French baby to Japan and he will start talking like native Japanese people. This property of human language is labeled as

- 1) displacement 2) openness 3) productivity 4) cultured transmission

7- Two of the unique core features of human language are

- 1) productivity and non-directionality 2) displacement and reciprocity
3) displacement and arbitrariness 4) arbitrariness and flexibility

8- Iconic signs whose phonetic forms have actual characteristics of their meanings are called

- 1) translation equivalents 2) indexical interpretation
3) onomatopoeic words 4) morphemic signs

Practice Answer key chapter 3

1- Choice 4

☞ Arbitrariness suggests the specific conventional aspect of language in which the language signs are arbitrary.

2- Choice 1

☞ Through reflexiveness we are able to use the language to talk about language – which is typically what linguists do.

3- Choice 2

☞ Communicative signals convey information intentionally, while informative signals convey information unintentionally.

4- Choice 4

☞ Open-endedness is a feature of human language that novel utterances are continually being created. In contrast, animals' language has a set of fixed-reference.

5- Choice 3

☞ Rapid fade is also called transitoriness.

6- Choice 4

☞ We acquire a language in a culture with other speakers and not from parental genes.

7- Choice 3

8- Choice 3

☞ Iconic signs whose phonetic forms have actual characteristics of their meanings are called onomatopoeic words.

Public University Multiple Choice Chapter 3

1- Words like *moo*, *bow-wow*, and *mew* support the idea that the relationship between the pronunciation of a word and its meaning is (State University, 83)

- 1) natural 2) arbitrary 3) man-made 4) conventional

2- A basic property of words is the relationship they exhibit between meaning and form. (State University, 84)

- 1) arbitrary 2) discreteness 3) displacement 4) fixed reference

3- suggests that language can be used to refer to context removed from the immediate situation of the speaker. (State University, 84)

- 1) Duality 2) Productivity 3) Displacement 4) Arbitrariness

Public University Explanatory Answer Key Chapter 3

1- Choice 1

☞ In onomatopoeic words the relationship between form and meaning is natural or non-arbitrary.

2- Choice 1

☞ Arbitrariness is the conventional relationship between the form and meaning. There is no natural connection between a linguistic form and its meaning.

3- Choice 3

Azad University Multiple Choice Chapter 3

1- The capacity of language users to produce and understand an infinitely large number of sentences, most of which they have not heard or used before is called (Azad University, 90)

- 1) Internal language 2) language faculty
3) Universal Grammar 4) creativity

Azad University Explanatory Answer Key Chapter 3

1- Choice 4

☞ Every human language is a creative system in that the system enables its users to continually create and comprehend novel utterances – utterances that a particular speaker may have neither heard nor produced in the past.

Chapter 4

The Sounds of Language

- ◆ **Types of Phonetics**
- ◆ **Airstream Mechanisms**
- ◆ **Articulatory Phonetics**
- ◆ **Traditional Linguistics**
- ◆ **Systematic Phonetics**
- ◆ **Prosodic (or suprasegmental) Features**

The Sounds of Language

The study of speech sounds is called phonetics. To describe speech sounds, it is necessary to know what an individual sound is, and how each sound differs from all others. This is not as easy as it may seem, for when we speak, the sounds seem to run together and it isn't at all obvious where one sound ends and the next begins. However, when we know the language we hear the individual sounds in our "mind's ear" and are able to make sense of them, unlike the sign painter in the cartoon. When you know a language you know the sounds of that language, and you know how to combine those sounds into words. When you know English you know the sounds represented by the letters b, s, and u, and you are able to combine them to form the words *bus* or *sub*.

1. TYPES OF PHONETICS

As the scientific study of human speech sounds, this branch of linguistics attempts to describe all the sounds used in human language, the way in which they are produced by speakers and perceived by listeners. So it is divided into three major sub-branches, based on what aspect of sounds is being studied. The primary interest of phoneticians is in **articulatory phonetics**, which is the study of how speech sounds are made, or articulated. Another area of study within phonetics includes **acoustic phonetics**, which deals with the physical properties of speech as sound waves in the air. The concepts studied in this branch of phonetics include frequency, amplitude, etc. The other main branch is **auditory** (or **perceptual**) **phonetics**, which deals with the perception of speech sounds via the ear; what is important in this branch of phonetics is the structure of the ear and how listeners perceive sounds via the ear. One branch of phonetics is concerned with the work done in the laboratory with the help of technical instruments and devices. For example, the work done in the area called **forensic phonetics**, which has application in legal cases, involving speaker identification and the analysis of recorded utterances.

In this chapter, however, we focus on articulatory phonetics and how the sounds of language are produced in the vocal tract. All normal languages have sounds produced by upper respiratory tract, involving the movement of an air stream through the vocal organs. So, before studying the sounds of language, we should be aware of the airstream mechanisms used in their production.

2. AIRSTREAM MECHANISMS

The production of any speech sounds (or any sounds at all) involves the movement of an airstream. Most speech sounds are produced by pushing air from the lungs out of the body through the mouth or sometimes through the nose. Because lung air is used, these sounds are called *pulmonic*, and because the air is pushed out, they are called *egressive*. The majority of