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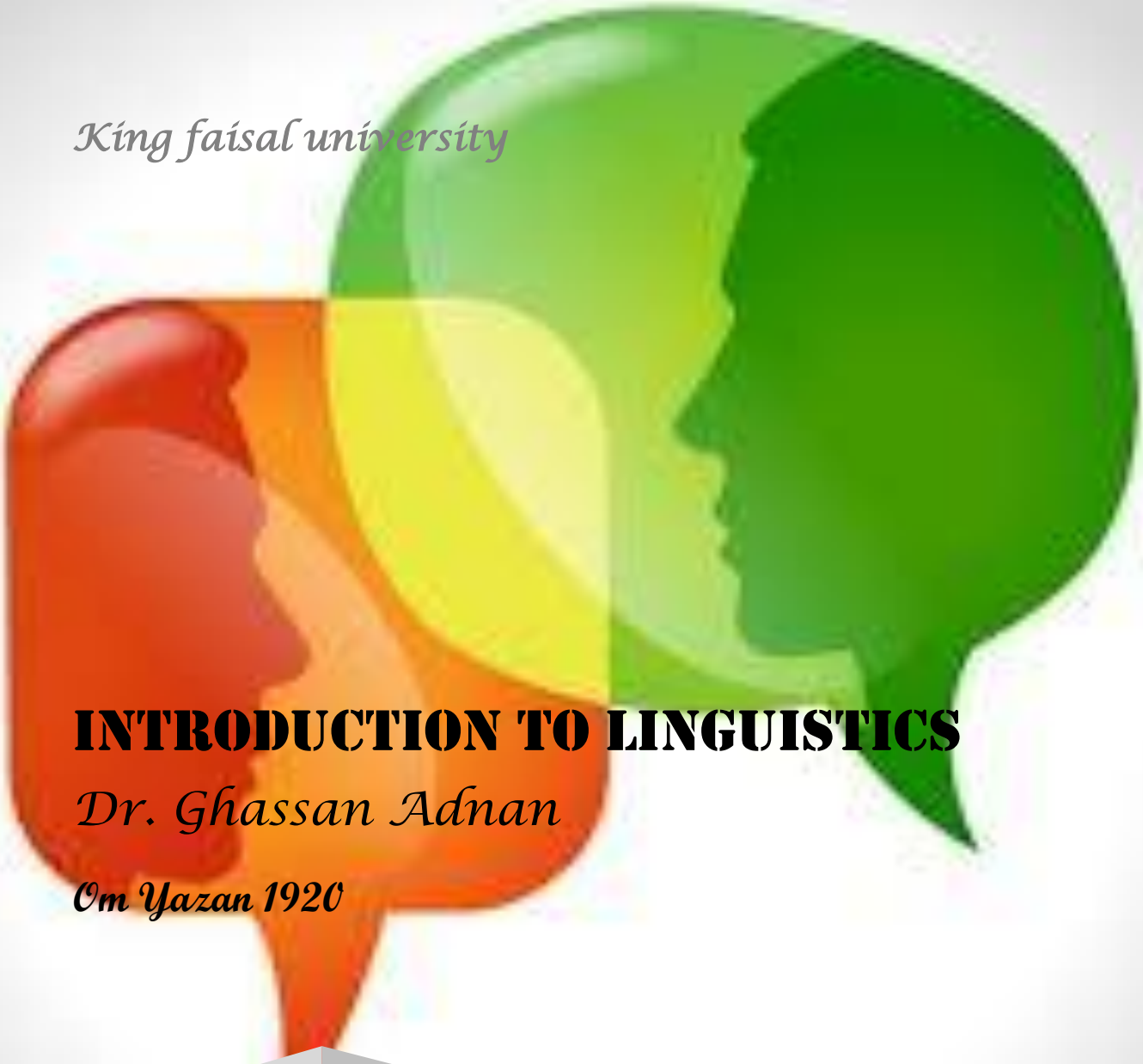

INTRODUCTION TO LINGUISTICS

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Om Yazan 1920

2012-2013

Lecture 1

Animals and human language:

- **Communication:**
- **Properties of human language:**

- **Displacement**
- **Arbitrariness**
- **Productivity**
- **Cultural transmission**

We should first distinguish between **communicative signals** and **informative signals**.

Informative Signals

- If someone is listening to you, he /she may be informed about you through a number of signals that you have not intentionally sent. **For example**, he /she may note that you have a cold (you sneezed), that you are not at ease (you shifted around in your seat), that your are disorganized (non-matching socks).

Communicative Signals

When you use language to tell this person, *I'm one of the applicants for the vacant position of senior brain surgeon at the hospital*, you are normally considered to be intentionally communicating something.

Informative Signals

The blackbird is not normally taken to be communicating anything by having black feathers, sitting on a branch and looking down at the ground.

Communicative Signals

But is considered to be sending a communicative signal with the loud squawking produced when a cat appears on the scene.

Properties of human language:

Displacement:

When your pet cat comes home and stands at your feet calling *meow*, you are likely to understand this message as relating to that time and place. If you ask your cat where it has been and what it was up to, you'll probably get the same *meow* response. Animal communication

seems to be designed exclusively for this moment, here and now. It cannot be used to relate events that are far removed in time and place.

Humans can refer to past and future time. This property of human language is called **displacement**. It allows language users to talk about things and events not present in the immediate environment. Displacement allows us to talk about things and places (ogre, Superman) whose existence we cannot even be sure of.

Arbitrariness:

There is no natural connection between a linguistic form and its meaning. The connection is quite arbitrary. We can't just look at the Arabic word كلب and, from its shape, for example, determine that it has a natural and obvious meaning any more than we can with its English translation form dog. The linguistic form has no natural or 'iconic' relationship with that hairy four-legged barking object out in the world. This aspect of the relationship between linguistic signs and objects in the world is described as **arbitrariness**.

Productivity:

Humans are continually creating new expressions by manipulating their linguistic resources to describe new objects and situations. This property is described as **productivity** (or 'creativity' or 'open-endedness') and essentially means that the potential number of vocal expressions in any human language is infinite.

The communication systems of other creatures are not like that. Cicadas have four signals to choose from and vervet monkeys have thirty-six vocal calls. It is not possible for creatures to produce new signals to communicate. The honeybee, normally able to communicate the location of a nectar source to other bees, will fail to do so if the location is really 'new.' the bees cannot manipulate its communication system to create a 'new' message including vertical distance.

Cultural transmission:

The process whereby a language is passed on from one generation to the next is described as **cultural transmission**. We inherit physical features such as brown eyes and dark hair from our parents, we do not inherit their language. We acquire a language in a culture with other speakers and not from parental genes. An infant born to Korean parents in Korea, but adopted and brought up from birth by English speakers in the United States, will have physical characteristics inherited from his or her natural parents, but will speak English.

Study questions

1. What is the difference between formative and communicative signals?
2.

Informative Signals

Someone may be informed about you through a number of signals that you have not intentionally sent.

Communicative Signals

You are normally considered to be intentionally communicating something.

3. Is it true that animals can refer to past and future time when they communicate?

No, it is not true.

4. Is it true that there is no natural connection between a linguistic form and its meaning?
   Yes, it is true.
5. Is it true that humans cannot create new expressions to describe new objects and situations?
   No, it is not true.

The sounds of language:

- ❖ Phonetics
- ❖ Voiced and voiceless sounds
- ❖ Place of articulation
  - Bilabials
  - Labiodentals
  - Dentals
  - Alveolars
  - Velars and Glottals
  - Charting consonant sounds
- ❖ Manner of articulation
  - Stops
  - Fricatives
  - Affricates
  - Nasals
  - Liquids
  - Glides
- ❖ Vowels
  - Diphthongs

The sounds of spoken English do not match up, a lot of the time, with letters of written English'

❖ Phonetics

Greek 'phone' = sound or voice

The general study of the characteristics of speech sounds.

Articulatory phonetics The study of how speech sounds are made

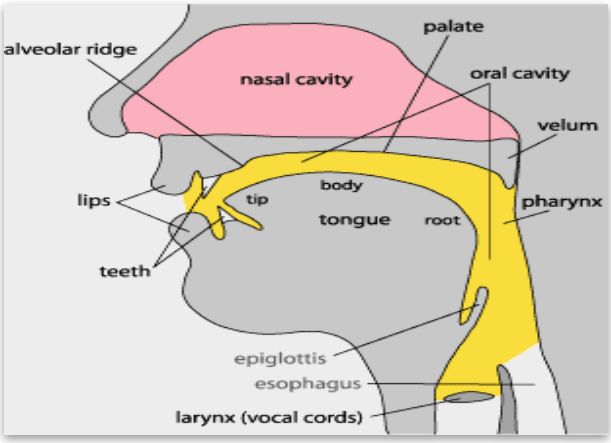
❖ Voiced and voiceless sounds:

1. When the vocal cords (vocal folds) are spread apart, the air from the lungs passes between them unimpeded. ZZZZZ or VVVVV (vibration)

2. When the vocal cords (vocal folds) are drawn together, the air from the lungs repeatedly pushes them apart as it passes through. SSSSS or FFFFF (no vibration)

❖ **Place of articulation:**

- **Bilabials**
- **Labiodentals**
- **Dentals**
- **Alveolars**
- **Palatals**
- **Velars**
- **Glottals**



Bilabials:

These are sounds formed using both upper and lower lips. The first sounds in the words *pat*, *bat*, and *mat* are all **bilabials**. They are represented by the symbols [p], which is **voiceless**, and [b] and [m], which are **voiced**.

Labiodentals:

These are sounds formed with the upper teeth and the lower lip. The first sounds in of the words *fat* and *vat* and the final sounds in the words *safe* and sa*ve* are **labiodentals**. They are represented by the symbols [f], which is **voiceless**, and [v], which is **voiced**. Cough and photo, are both pronounced as [f].

Dentals:

These are sounds formed with the tongue tip behind the upper front teeth. The initial sound of *thin* and the final sound of *bath* are both **voiceless dentals**. The symbol used for this sound is [θ]. The voiced dental is represented by the symbol [ð] like *the*, *there*, *then* and *thus*.

Alveolars:

These are sounds formed with the front part of the tongue on the alveolar ridge. The initial sounds in *top*, *dip*, *sit*, *zoo* and *nut* are all **alveolars**. The symbols for these sounds are easy to remember [t], [d], [s], [z], [n]. Of these, [t] and [s] are voiceless whereas [d], [z] and [n] are voiced. Other alveolars are the [l] sound as in *lap* and [r] as in *right*.

Palatals:

These are sounds formed with the tongue and the hard palate. The initial sounds in the words *shout* and *child*, which are both voiceless. The "sh" sound is represented as [ʃ] and the "ch" sound is represented as [tʃ]. The word *shoe-brush* begins and ends with the voiceless palatal sound [ʃ] and the word *church* begins and ends with the other voiceless palatal sound [tʃ]. The sound [ʒ] such as *treasure* and *pleasure* which is voiced palatal. The other voiced palatal is [dʒ] as in *joke* and *gem*. The sound [j] is also voiced palatal as in *yet* .

Velars:

Sounds produced with the back of the tongue against the velum are called velars. . The sound [k] as in *cook* is voiceless. The sound [g] as in *go.* The voiced sound [ŋ] as in *bang.*

Glottals:

There is one sound that is produced without the active use of the tongue and other parts of the mouth. It is the voiceless sound [h] as in *horse* .

❖ Charting consonant sounds:

Place → / Manner ↓	Bilabial		Labiodental		Dental		Alveolar		Palatal		Velar		Glottal	
	-V	+V	-V	+V	-V	+V	-V	+V	-V	+V	-V	+V	-V	+V
Stops	p	b					t	d			k	g		
fricatives			f	v	θ	ð	s	z	ʃ	ʒ			h	
Affricates									tʃ	dʒ				
Nasals		m						n						
liquids								l r						
Glides		w								j				

❖ Manner of articulation:

- **Stops**
- **Fricatives**
- **Affricates**
- **Nasals**
- **Liquids**
- **Glides**

Stops:

The set [p], [b], [t], [d], [k], [g] are all produced by some form of "stopping" of the air stream (very briefly) then letting it go abruptly. This type of consonant sound , resulting from a blocking or stopping effect on the air stream, is called a stop (or a "plosive"). Example: *bed*.

Fricatives:

The set of sounds [f], [v], [θ], [ð], [s], [z], [ʃ], [ʒ] involved almost blocking the air stream and having the air push through the very narrow opening. As the air is pushed through, a type of friction is produced and the resulting sounds are called fricatives. Example: *fish*, *those*.

Affricates:

If you combine a brief stopping of the air stream with an obstructed release which causes some friction, you will be able to produce the sounds [tʃ] and [dʒ] these are called affricates . Example: *cheap* and *jeep*.

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Nasals:

When the velum is lowered and the air stream is allowed to flow out through the nose to produce [m], [n] and [n], the sounds are described as nasals Example: *morning* and *name*.

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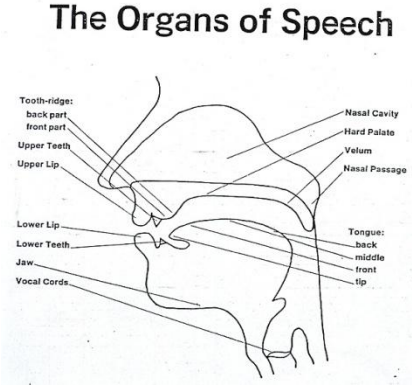
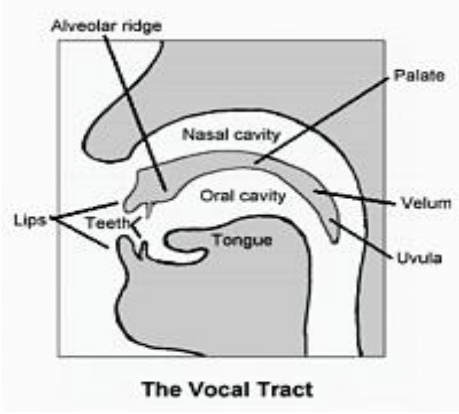
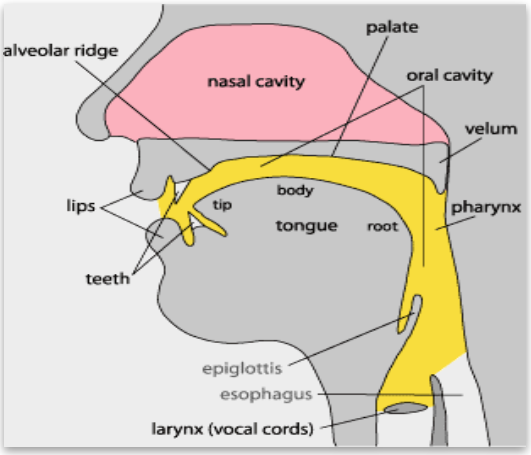




Lecture 2

The sounds of language:

❖ Place of articulation:



- **Bilabials**
- **Labiodentals**
- **Dentals**
- **Alveolars**
- **Palatals**
- **Velars**
- **Glottals**

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❖ **Manner of articulation:**

- **Stops**
- **Fricatives**
- **Affricates**
- **Nasals**
- **Liquids**
- **Glides**

Stops:

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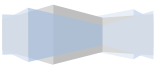

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Liquids:

The initial sounds in *led* and *red* are described as **liquids**. They are both voiced. The [l] sound is called a lateral liquid and formed by letting the air stream flow around the sides of the tongue as the tip of the tongue makes contact with the middle of the alveolar ridge. The [r] sound at the beginning of red is formed with the tongue tip raised and curled back near the alveolar ridge.

Glides:

The sounds [w] and [j] are described as **glides**. They are both voiced and occur at the beginning of *we*, *you* and *yes*. These sounds are typically produced with the tongue in motion (or "gliding") to or from the position of a vowel and are sometimes called semi-vowels.

❖ Charting consonant sounds:

Place	Bilabial		Labiodental		Dental		Alveolar		Palatal		Velar		Glottal	
Voicing	-V	+V	-V	+V	-V	+V	-V	+V	-V	+V	-V	+V	-V	+V
Manner														
Stops	p	b					t	d			k	g		
Fricatives			f	v	θ	ð	s	z	ʃ	ʒ			h	
Affricates									tʃ	dʒ				
Nasals		m						n				ŋ		
Liquids								l r						
Glides		w								j				

Study questions

1. Which of the following words normally end with **voiceless** (- V) sounds and which end with **voiced** sounds (+ V) sounds?

a. bang + V	d. fizz + V	g. splat - V
b. crash - V	e. rap - V	h. thud + V
c. ding + V	f. smack - V	i. wham + V

2. Try to pronounce the initial sounds of the following words and indentify the place of articulation of each one (e.g. bilabial, alveolar, etc.).

a. calf velar	e. hand glottal	i. shoulder palatal
b. chin palatal	f. knee nasal	j. stomach alveolar
c. foot labiodental	g. mouth nasal	k. thigh dental
d. groin velar	h. pelvis bilabial	l. toe alveolar

1. Identify the manner of articulation of the initial sounds in the following words (stop, fricative, etc.).

a. cheery affricate	d. funny fricative	g. merry nasal
b. crazy stop	e. jolly affricate	h. silly fricative
c. dizzy stop	f. loony liquid	i. wimpy glide

The sounds of language:

❖ Vowels:

Vowel sounds are produced with a relatively free flow of air. They are typically voiced. To describe vowel sounds, we consider the way in which the tongue influences the shape through which the air must pass. To talk about a place of articulation, we think of the space inside the mouth as having a front versus a back and a high versus a low area. Thus, in the pronunciation of heat and *hit*, we talk about 'high, front' vowel sounds because the sound is made with the front part of the mouth in a raised position.

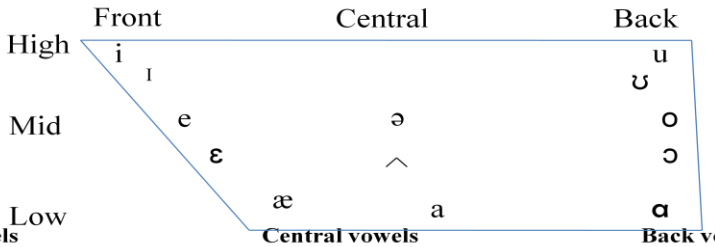
In contrast, the vowel sound in *hat* is produced with the tongue in a lower position and the sound in *hot* can be described as a 'low, back' vowel.

heat, *hit* your mouth will stay fairly closed

hat, *hot* sound your tongue will move lower and cause your mouth to open wider.

❖ Vowels:

Vowel sounds are produced with a relatively free flow of air. They are having a



Front vowels
[i] key, me, beef, heat
[ɪ] bid, myth
[ɛ] bed, dead, said
[æ] bad ,laugh, wrap

Central vowels
[ə] above, oven, support
[ʌ] blood, tough

Back vowels
[u] boo, move, two, you
[ʊ] book, could, put
[ɔ] born, caught, fall
[ɑ] book, could, put

❖ Vowels:

- **Diphthongs**:

The combination of two sounds is known as **diphthongs**.

[aɪ] buy, eye, I, pie, sigh
[aʊ] doubt, cow, bough
[eɪ] bait, eight, great, late, say
[oʊ] boat, home, throw, toe
[ɔɪ] boy, noise

Homework

1. Using symbols introduced in this chapter, write a basic phonetic transcription of the most common pronunciation of the following words..

a. catch _____ e. noise _____ i. thought _____

b. doubt _____ f. phone _____ j. tough _____

c. gem _____ g. shy _____ k. would _____

d. measure _____ h. these _____ l. wring _____

lecture 3

The sound patterns of language:

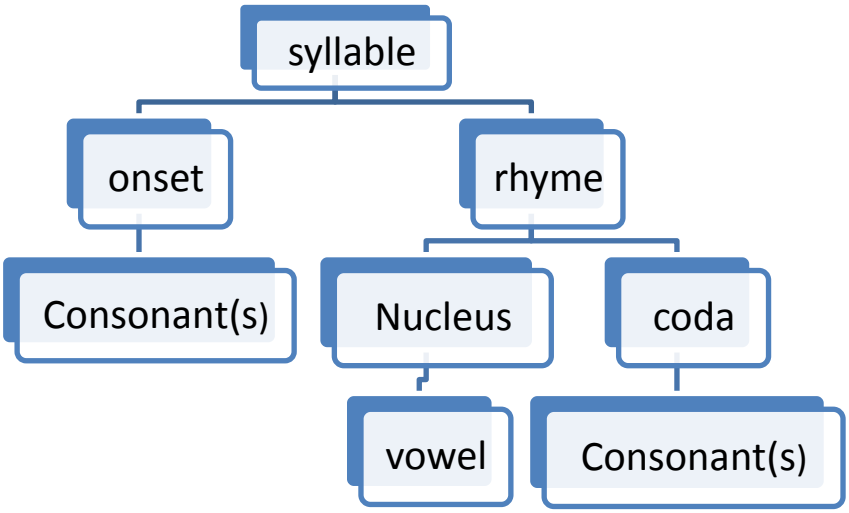
- ❖ Phonology
- ❖ Phonemes
- ❖ Phones and allophones
- ❖ Minimal pairs and sets
- ❖ Syllables

- Consonant clusters
- Assimilation
- Elision
- Phonology: is the description of the systems and patterns of speech sounds in a language.
- Phonemes: are meaningful sounds, if one sound is used instead of the other in a word its meaning will change. /f/ and /v/ *fat* and *vat*

1 phoneme = multiple letters	/k/ = 'c' in 'cat' 'k' in 'bike'
2 letters together = 1 phoneme	'th' = /θ/ as in 'thing'
2 letters together = 1 phoneme	'ch' = /k/ in 'chemistry'

- Phones and allophones: phones are different versions of sound-type regularly produced in actual speech. They are phonetic units and appear in square brackets. When we have a set of phones, all of which are versions of one phoneme, we add the prefix "allo-" (one of a closely related set) and refer to them as **allophones** of that phonemes. [t] sound in the word *tar* is normally pronounced with a stronger puff of air than is present in the [t] sound in the word *star* . *(aspiration)*
- Minimal pairs and sets: when two words such as *pat* and *bat* are identical in form except for a contrast in one phoneme, occurring in the same position, the two words are described as a minimal pair. site – side, bet – bat, night – right, might – fight. One minimal set based on the vowel phonemes (*heat*, *hit*, *hat*, *hot*, *hut*, *hate*), and another minimal set based on consonant phonemes (big, pig, rig, fig, dig, *wig*).
- Syllables:

A syllable must contain a vowel or vowel like sound, including diphthongs. The most common type of syllable in language also has a *consonant* (C) before the *vowel* (V) and is typically represented as CV. The basic elements of the syllabus are the *onset* (one or more consonants) followed by the rhyme. The rhyme (sometimes written as "rime") consists of a vowel which is treated as the nucleus, plus any following consonant(s), described as the coda.



Syllables like *me*, *to* or *no* have an onset and a nucleus, but no coda. They are known as **open syllables**. When a coda is present, as in the syllables *up*, *cup*, *at* or *hat*, they are called **closed syllables**.

The basic structure of the kind of syllable found in English words:

green (CCVC), eggs (VCC), and (VCC), I (V), do (CV), not (CVC),

like (CVC), them (CVC), Sam (CVC), am (VC)

- Consonant clusters:

Both the onset and the coda can consist of more than one consonant, also known as a consonant cluster. The combination /st/ is a consonant cluster (CC) used as onset in the word stop, and as coda in the word post. Examples, black, bread, trick, flat.

- Assimilation:

When two sound segments occur in sequence and some aspect of one segment is taken or "copied" by the other, the process is known as assimilation.

Examples,

have	*I have to go* (in everyday speech)
good girl	*goog girl*
good boy	*goob boy*

- Elision:

The process of not pronouncing a sound segment that night be present in the deliberately careful pronunciation of a word in isolation is described as elision.

Examples: *you and me* (**d** sound is not pronounced)

friendship (**d** sound is not pronounced)

he must be (t sound is not pronounced)

Study questions

Do exercises 2, 3 and 6 in page 49.

Lecture 4

Word formation

- **Word formation:**
  - Etymology
  - Coinage
  - Borrowing
  - Compounding
  - Blending
  - Clipping
  - Backformation
  - Conversion
  - Acronyms
  - Derivation
  - Prefixes and suffixes

Etymology:

Etymology is the study of the history of words, their origins, and how their form and meaning have changed over time. By an extension, the term "etymology (of a word)" means the origin of a particular word.

- Spanish: has contributed many words, particularly in the southwestern United States. Examples include *buckaroo*, *alligator*, *rodeo*, and states' names such as *Colorado* and *Florida*.
- Portuguese: *Albino*, *lingo*, *verandah*, and *coconut*.
- Italian: *diva*, *prima donna*, *pasta*, *pizza*, *paparazzi*, and *umbrella*.

- Finnish: *sauna*
- Arabic: *adobe*, *alcohol*, *algebra*, *apricot*, *assassin*, *caliber*, *cotton*, *hazard*, *jacket*, *jar*, *mosque*, *Muslim*, *orange*, *safari*, *sofa*, and *zero*.
- Japanese: *sushi*, and *tsunami*.

Coinage

Coinage is the word formation process in which a new word is created either deliberately or accidentally without using the other word formation processes and often from seemingly nothing. For example, the following list of words provides some common coinages found in everyday English: aspirin, escalator, band-aid, Frisbee, Google, kerosene, Kleenex, Xerox, zipper.

Borrowing

Borrowing is the word formation process in which a word from one language is borrowed directly into another language. For example, the following common English words are borrowed from foreign languages:

algebra – Arabic

chowmein – Chinese

murder – French

paprika – Hungarian

pizza – Italian

yo-yo – Tagalog

Compounding

Compounding is the word formation process in which two or more lexemes combine into a single new word. Compound words may be written as one word or as two words joined with a hyphen. For example:

noun-noun compound: note + book → notebook

adjective-noun compound: blue + berry → blueberry

verb-noun compound: work + room → workroom

verb-preposition compound: break + up → breakup

Compounds may be compositional, meaning that the meaning of the new word is determined by combining the meanings of the parts, or non-compositional, meaning that the meaning of the new word cannot be determined by combining the meanings of the parts. For example, a *blueberry* is a berry that is blue.

borrowed words are also referred to as loanwords.

Blending

Blending is the word formation process in which parts of two or more words combine to create a new word whose meaning is often a combination of the original words. For example:

advertisement + entertainment →advertainment

biographical + picture → biopic

breakfast + lunch → brunch

motor + hotel → motel

smoke + fog → smog

Spanish + English → Spanglish

spoon + fork →spork

Clipping

Clipping is the word formation process in which a word is reduced or shortened without changing the meaning of the word. Clipping differs from back-formation in that the new word retains the meaning of the original word. For example:

examination – exam

influenza – flu

laboratory – lab

mathematics – math

photograph – photo

telephone – phone

Clipping

The four types of clipping are back clipping, fore-clipping, middle clipping, and complex clipping. Back clipping is removing the end of a word as in *gas* from *gasoline*. Fore-clipping is removing the beginning of a word as in *gator* from *alligator*. Middle clipping is retaining only the middle of a word as in *flu* from

influenza. Complex clipping is removing multiple parts from multiple words as in *sitcom* from *situation comedy*.

Back-Formation

Back-formation is the word formation process in which an actual or supposed derivational affix detaches from the base form of a word to create a new word. For example, the following list provides examples of some common back-formations in English:

Original – Back-formation

babysitter – babysit

donation – donate

gambler – gamble

moonlighter – moonlight

television – televise

Conversion

Conversion is the word formation process in which a word of one grammatical form becomes a word of another grammatical form without any changes to spelling or pronunciation. For example, the nouns *bottle*, *butter*, *chair* have come to be used, through conversion, as verbs: *We bottled the home-juice last night; Have you buttered the toast?; someone has to chair the meeting; They are vacationing in Florida*.

Examples:

Adjectives	Verbs
dirty	to dirty
empty	to empty

Noun to Verb Conversion The most productive form of conversion in English is noun to verb conversion. The following list provides examples of verbs converted from nouns:

Noun – Verb

access – to access

bottle – to bottle

can – to can

closet – to closet

email – to email

fool – to fool

Google – to google

name – to name

salt – to salt

ship – to ship

Acronyms

Acronyms are words formed by the word formation process in which an initialism is pronounced as a word. For example, *HIV* is an initialism for Human Immunodeficiency Virus that is spoken as the three letters H-I-V. However, *AIDS* is an acronym for Acquired Immunodeficiency Syndrome that is spoken as the word *AIDS*. Other examples of acronyms in English include:

ASAP – as soon as possible

PIN – personal identification number

radar - radio detection and ranging

TESOL – Teachers of English to Speakers of Other Languages

Acronyms are related to the word formation process of abbreviation.

Derivation

Derivation is the word formation process in which a derivational affix attaches to the base form of a word to create a new word. Affixes, which include prefixes and suffixes, are bound morphemes. Morphemes are the smallest linguistic unit of a language with semantic meaning. Bound morphemes, unlike free morphemes, cannot stand alone but must attach to another morpheme such as a word. For example, the following two lists provide examples of some common prefixes and suffixes with definitions in English:

Prefixes

a- – without, not

co- – together

de- – opposite, negative, separation

dis- –opposite, negative

en- – cause to be

ex- – former, previous, from

in- – negative, not

non- – absence, not

re- – again, repeatedly

un- – negative, not, opposite

Suffixes

-able – sense of being

-er – agent

-ful – characterized by

-fy – make, become, cause to be

-ism – action or practice, state or condition

-less – lack of

-ly – -like

-ology – study, science

-ship – condition, character, skill

-y – characterized by, condition

Study questions

Do exercises 2, 3 and 6 in page 49.

Lecture 5

Morphology

- ❖ Morphology
- ❖ Morphemes
- • Free and bound morphemes
- • Lexical and functional morphemes

- Derivational and inflectional morphemes
- Morphological description
- Morphs and allomorphs

Morphology is the study of word formation. The basic unit in the study of morphology is the morpheme.

A morpheme or morph is a minimal unit of meaning or grammatical function. Units of grammatical function include forms used to indicate past tense or plural. For example:

The police reopened the investigation

reopened consists of three *morphemes*. One minimal unit of meaning is *open*, another minimal unit of meaning is *re-* (meaning 'again') and a minimal unit of grammatical function is *–ed* (indicating past tense).

tourists

tour = one minimal unit of meaning.

-ist = another minimal unit of meaning. (person who does something)

-s = a minimal unit of grammatical function (indicating plural).

Morphemes are two types:

- **Free** and **bound morphemes**.

Free morphemes are morphemes that can stand by themselves as single words.

For example: *open* and *tour*

- **Bound morphemes** are morphemes that cannot normally stand alone and are typically attached to another form.

For example: re-, -ist, -ed, -s (prefixes and suffixes)

Free morphemes can generally be identified as the set of separate English word forms such as basic nouns, adjectives, verbs, etc

When free morphemes are used with bound morphemes attached, the basic word forms are technically known as stems.

For example: undressed and carelessness

(un- bound= prefix) (dress free = stem) (-ed bound= suffix)

❖ Free morphemes consist of two categories

Lexical morphemes: ordinary nouns, adjectives, and verbs that we think of as the words that carry the "content" of the messages we convey.

For example: *girl*, *man*, *house*, *tiger*, *sad*, *long*, *yellow*, *open*, *look*, *follow*, *break*. (they are described as "open")

Functional morphemes: conjunctions, prepositions, articles and pronouns.

For example: *and*, *but*, *when*, *because*, *on*, *near*, *above*, *in*, *the*, *that*, *it, them.* (they are described as "closed")

❖ Bound morphemes consist of two categories

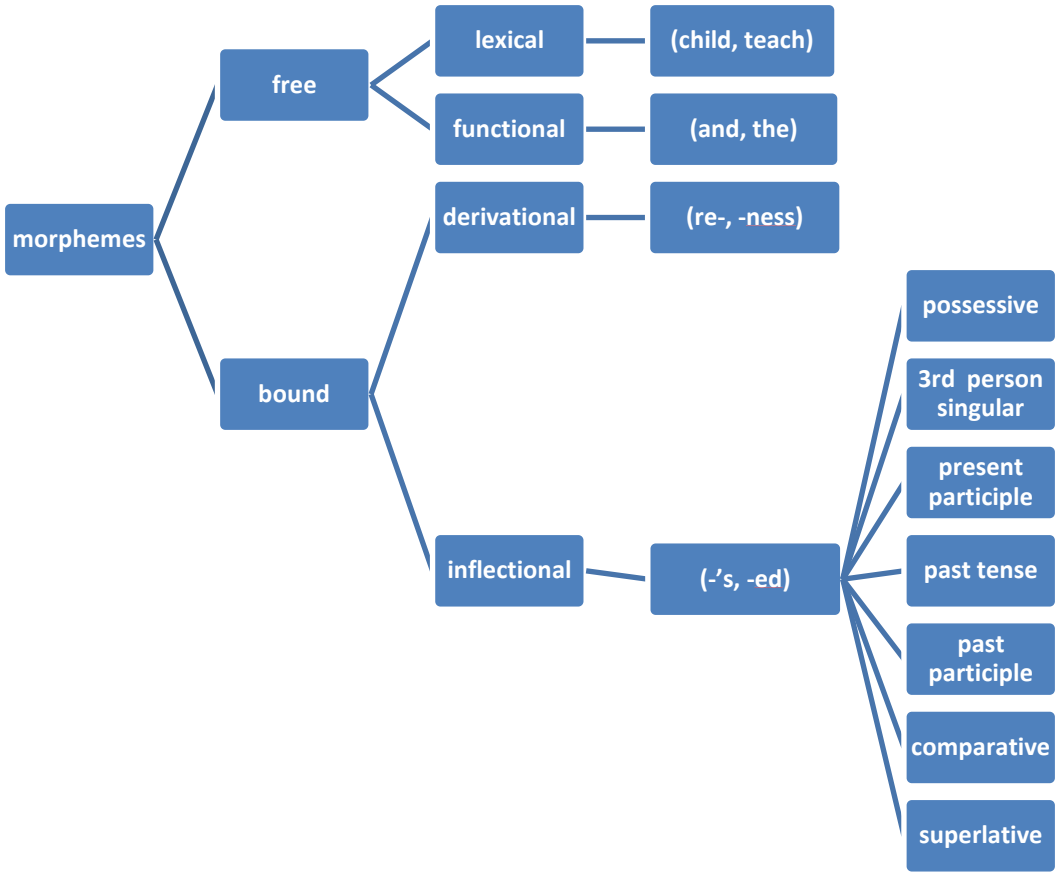
Derivational morphemes are used to make new words.

For example: *careful + -ful or careless + -less, foolish + -ish, quick + -ly, payment + -ment. re- + reopen, mis-+ misused. (suffixes and prefixes)*

Inflectional morphemes are used to indicate aspects of grammatical function of a word. English has only eight inflectional morphemes.

1. *Jim's two sisters are really different. (possessive, plural)*
2. *One likes to have fun and is always laughing. (3rd person singular, present participle)*
3. *The other liked to read and has always taken things seriously. (past tense, past participle)*
4. *One is the loudest person in the house and the other is quieter that a mouse. (comparative, superlative)*

(inflectional morphemes are all suffixes)



❖ Morphological description

The child's wildness shocked the teachers

The	child	-'s	wild	-ness	shock	-ed	the	teach	-er	-s
functional	lexical	inflectional	lexical	derivational	lexical	inflectional	functional	lexical	derivational	inflectional

❖ Morphs and allomorphs

cats consists of two morphs cat + s (a lexical morpheme and an inflectional morpheme)

buses consist of two morphs bus + es (a lexical morpheme and an inflectional morpheme)

(-s and -es) are called allomorphs

sheep + plural

man + plural

Study questions

- Do exercises 1, 2 a b c, 3 a b c d, 4 in page 74.

Lecture 6

Grammar

- Grammar
- Traditional grammar
- The parts of speech
  - Nouns
  - Articles
  - Adjectives
  - Verbs
  - Adverbs
  - Prepositions
  - Pronouns
  - Conjunctions
- Agreement
- Traditional analysis
- The prescriptive approach

Grammar

The process of describing the structure of phrases and sentences in such a way that we account for all the grammatical sequences in a language and rule out all the ungrammatical sequences.

Traditional grammar:

When we label the grammatical categories "article," "adjective" and "noun" of the words in the phrase *the lucky boys* we use traditional grammar. The best-known terms from that tradition are those used in describing the parts of speech.

The parts of speech:

"*The lucky boys found a backpack in the park and they opened it carefully*"

The	*lucky*	*boys*	*found*	*a*
article	adjective	noun	verb	article
backpack	*in*	*the*	*park*	
noun	preposition	article	noun	
and	*they*	*opened*	*it*	
conjunction	pronoun	verb	pronoun	
carefully				
adverb				

- **Nouns** are often defined as words, which name persons, places or things. For example: ***boy, river, friend, Mexico, day, school, university, idea, John, movie, vacation, eye, dream, flag, teacher, class, grammar***. ***John*** is a noun because it is the name of a person; ***Mexico*** is a noun because it is the name of a place.

- **Articles** are words (***a, an, the***) used with nouns to form noun phrases classifying those "things" (*you can have **a** banana or **an** apple*) or indentifying them as already known (*I'll take **the** apple*).

- **Adjectives** are words used, typically with nouns, to provide more information about the things referred to (***happy** people, **large** objects, a **strange** experience).*

- **Verbs** are words used to refer to various kinds of actions (go, talk) and states (be, have) involving people and things in events (*Sarah **is** ill and **has** a sore throat so she can't **talk** or **go** anywhere).*

- **Adverbs** are words used, typically with verbs, to provide more information about actions, states and events (***slowly***, ***yesterday***) . Some adverbs (***really***, ***very***) are also used with adjectives to modify information about things (***Really** large objects move **slowly**. I had a **very** strange experience **yesterday***).

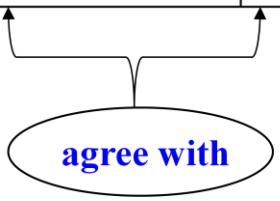
- **Prepositions** are words (***at, in, on, near, with, without***) used with nouns in phrases providing information about time (***at** five o'clock*, ***in** the morning*) , place (***on** the table, **near** the window*) and other connections (***with** a knife, **without** a thought*) involving actions and things.

- **Pronoun**s are words (she, herself, they, it, you) used in place of noun phrases, typically referring to people and things already known (***she** talks to **herself**. **They** said **it** belonged to **you***).

- **Conjunctions** are words (and, but, because, when) used to make connections and indicate relationship between events (*Dana's husband was so sweet **and** he helped her a lot **because** she couldn't do much **when** she was pregnant*)

- Agreement is the grammatical connection between two parts of a sentence (number, person, tense, voice and gender) as in the connection between a subject ***Cathy*** and the form of a verb ***loves chocolate***. (**agreement in number (singular and plural) and person**)

First person (singular)	***I***	***love*** chocolate
Second person (singular)	***You***	***love*** chocolate
Third person (singular)	***He, she, it*** (or ***Cathy***)	***loves*** chocolate



❖ ***Cathy is loved*** *by her dog* or ***Cathy is loved*** **(agreement in tense)**

❖ ***Cathy*** *is loved by* ***her*** *dog.* **(agreement in gender)**

❖ Traditional analysis:

Present tense, active voice	First person singular	*I*	*write*
	Second person singular	*You*	*write*
	Third person singular	*He, she, it*	*writes*
	First person plural	*We*	*write*
	Second person plural	*You*	*write*
	Third person plural	*They*	*write*

- The prescriptive approach:

An approach taken by a number of grammarians, mainly in eighteen-century England, who set out rules for the "proper" use of English.

Who did you go with?	*With whom did you go?*
Marry runs faster than me.	*Marry runs faster than I.*
Me and my family.	*My family and I.*

Study questions

Do exercises 1 and 3 (i and ii) in page 92.

Lecture 7

Syntax

- Syntax
- Deep and surface structure
- Structural ambiguity
- Recursion
- Tree diagrams
- Symbols used in syntactic analysis
- Lexical rules
- Movement rules

Syntax is the study of the principles and processes by which sentences are constructed in particular languages.

- Surface structure: (superficial level)

1. Charlie broke the window (in traditional grammar it is called an active sentence focusing on what Charlie did)

2. The window was broken by Charlie. (in traditional grammar it is called a passive sentence focusing on the window and what happened to it)

1 & 2 have different syntactic forms. But very closely related

Deep structure: (underlying level)

An abstract level of structural organization in which all the elements determining structural interpretation are represented.

1. It was Charlie who broke the window.

2. Was the window broken by Charlie?

Structural ambiguity:

I shot an elephant in my pajamas. (two underlying structures with the same surface structure)

1. I shot an elephant (while I was) in my pajamas

2. I shot an elephant (which was) in my pajamas

Recursion : (repeating any number of times)

The gun was on the table. (create a prepositional phrase again and again)

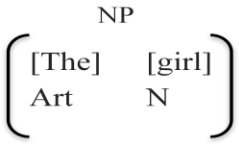
(on the table) (near the window) (in the bedroom)

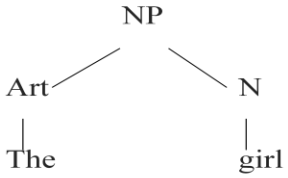
The gun was on the table near the window in the bedroom.

Cathy knew that Mary helped George.

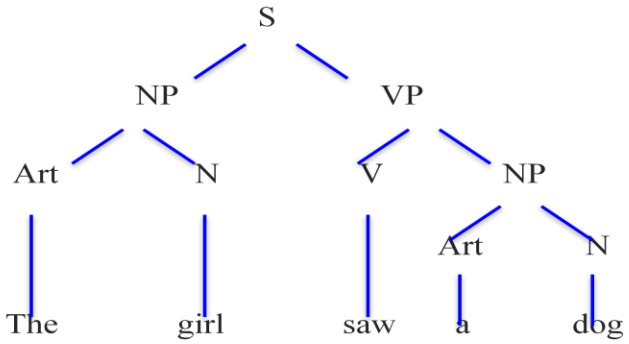
John believed that Cathy knew that Mary helped George. (no end)

- Tree diagrams:





❖ Tree diagrams:



❖ Symbols used in syntactic analysis:

NP → Art N
NP → Pro
NP → PN

NP → { Art N, Pro, PN }

NP → (Art N, Pro, PN)

S sentence	NP noun phrase	PN proper noun
N noun	VP verb phrase	Adv adveb
V verb	Adj adjective	Prep preposition
Art article	Pro pronoun	PP prepositional phrase

❖ Movement rules:

You will help Mary

Will you help Mary

❖ Lexical rules:

PN	{Mary, George}
N	{girl, boy, dog}
Art	{a, the}
Pro	{it, you}
V	{followed, helped, saw}

A dog followed the boy

Study Questions

- Do exercises 4 and 6 in page 107

Lecture8

Semantics

- **Semantics:**
- Meaning
- Semantic features
- Semantic roles
  - Agent and theme
- Lexical relations

- Lexical relations
  - Synonymy
  - Antonymy
  - Hyponymy
  - Prototypes
  - Homophones and homonyms
  - Polysemy
  - Word play
  - Metonymy

Study questions

Do exercises 4, 5 and 6 in page 123

Lecture 9

Pragmatics

- Meaning
- Context
  - Deixis
- Reference
  - Inference
  - Anaphora
  - Presupposition
- Speech acts

- Direct and indirect speech acts

❖ Politeness

❖ Negative and positive face

❖ **Pragmatics** is the study of what speakers mean, or "speaker meaning,". In many ways, pragmatics is the study of "*invisible*" meaning, or how we recognize what is meant even when it isn't actually said or written. In order for that to happen, speakers (or writers) must be able to depend on a lot of shared assumptions and expectations when they try to communicate. The investigation of those assumptions and expectations provides us with some insights into how more is always being communicated than is said.

Driving by a parking garage, you may see a large sign like the one in the picture. You read the sign, knowing what each of the words means and what the sign as a whole means. However, you don't normally think that the sign is advertising a place where you can park your "heated attendant." (You take an attendant, you heat him/her up, and this is where you can park him/her.) Alternatively, the sign may indicate a place where parking will be carried out by attendants who have been heated.

The words in the sign may allow these interpretations, but we would normally understand that we can park a car in this place, that it's a heated area, and that there will be an attendant to look after the car. So, how do we decide that the sign means this when the sign doesn't even have the word car on it? We must use the meanings of the words, the context in which they occur, and some pre-existing knowledge of what would be a likely message as we work toward a reasonable interpretation of what the producer of the sign intended it to convey. Our interpretation of the "meaning" of the sign is not based solely on the words, but on what we think the writer intended to communicate.

In the other picture, assuming things are normal and this store has not gone into the business of selling young children, we can recognize an advertisement for a sale of clothes for those babies and toddlers. The word clothes doesn't appear in the message, but we can bring that idea to our interpretation of the message as we work out what the advertiser intended us to understand. We are actively involved in creating an interpretation of what we read and hear.

Context:

In our discussion of the last two examples, we emphasized the influence of context. There are different kinds of context. One kind is described as linguistic context, also known as co-text. The co-text of a word is the set of other words used in the same phrase or sentence. The surrounding co-text has a strong effect on what we think the word probably means.

In the last chapter, we identified the word *bank* as a homonym, a single form with more than one meaning. How do we usually know which meaning is intended in a particular sentence? We normally do so on the basis of linguistic context. If the word *bank* is used in a sentence together with words like steep or overgrown, we have no problem deciding which type of bank is meant. Or, if we hear someone say that she has to get to the bank to withdraw some cash, we know from this linguistic context which type of bank is intended.

More generally, we know how to interpret words on the basis of physical context. If we see the word BANK on the wall of a building in a city, the physical location will influence our interpretation. While this may seem rather obvious, we should keep in mind that it is not the actual physical situation "out there" that constitutes "the context" for interpreting words or sentences. The relevant context is our mental representation of those aspects of what is physically out there that we use in arriving at an interpretation. Our understanding of much of what we read and hear is tied to this processing of aspects of the physical context, particularly the time and place, in which we encounter linguistic expressions.

Deixis:

There are some very common words in our language that can't be interpreted at all if we don't know the context, especially the physical context of the speaker. These are words such as *here* and *there*, *this* or

that, *now* and *then*, *yesterday*, *today* or *tomorrow*, as well as pronouns such as *you, me, she, him, it, them*. Some sentences of English are virtually impossible to understand if we don't know who is speaking, about whom, where and when. For example:

You'll have to bring it back tomorrow because she isn't here today.

Out of context, this sentence is really vague. It contains a large number of expressions (*you, it, tomorrow, she, here, today*) that rely on knowledge of the immediate physical context for their interpretation (i.e. that the delivery driver will have to return on February 15 to 660 College Drive with the long box labeled "flowers, handle with care" addressed to Lisa Landry). Expressions such as tomorrow and here are obvious examples of bits of language that we can only understand in terms of the speaker's intended meaning. They are technically known as deictic (/daıktık/) expressions, from the Greek word deixis, which means "pointing" via language.

We use deixis to point to things (*it, this, these boxes*) and people (*him, them, those students*), sometimes called person deixis. Words and phrases used to point to a location (*here, there, near that*) are examples of spatial deixis, and those used to point to a time (*now, then, last week*) are examples of temporal deixis.

All these deictic expressions have to be interpreted in terms of which person, place or time the speaker has in mind. We make a broad distinction between what is marked as close to the speaker (*this, here, now*) and what is distant (*that, there, then*). We can also indicate whether movement is away from the speaker's location (*go*) or toward the speaker's location (*come*). If you're looking for someone and she appears, moving toward you, you can say *Here she comes*!. If, however, she is moving away from you in the distance, you're more likely to say *There she goes*!. The same deictic effect explains the different situations in which you would tell someone to Go to bed versus Come to bed.

Reference:

In discussing deixis, we assumed that the use of words to refer to people, places and times was a simple matter. However, words themselves don't refer to anything. People refer. We have to define reference as an act by which a speaker (or writer) uses language to enable a listener (or reader) to identify something. To perform an act of reference, we can use proper nouns (*Chomsky, Jennifer, Whiskas*), other nouns in phrases (*a writer, my friend, the cat*) or pronouns (*he, she, it*). We sometimes assume that these words identify someone or something uniquely, but it is more accurate to say that, for each word or phrase, there is a "range of reference." The words *Jennifer* or *friend* or *s*he can be used to refer to many entities in the world. As we observed earlier, an expression such as the *war* doesn't directly identify anything by itself, because its reference depends on who is using it.

We can also refer to things when we're not sure what to call them. We can use expressions such as *the blue thing* and *that icky stuff* and we can even invent names. For instance, *there was a man who always drove his motorcycle fast and loud through my neighborhood and was locally referred to as Mr. Kawasaki*. In this case, a brand name for a motorcycle is being used to refer to a person.

Inference:

As in the "Mr. Kawasaki" example, a successful act of reference depends more on the listener's ability to recognize what we mean than on the listener's "dictionary" knowledge of a word we use. For example, in a restaurant, one waiter can ask another, *Where's the spinach salad sitting?* and receive the reply, *He's sitting by the door*. If you're studying linguistics, you might ask someone, *Can I look at your Chomsky*? And get the response, *Sure, it's on the shelf over there*. These examples make it clear that we can use names associated with things (*salad*) to refer to people, and use names of people (*Chomsky*) to refer to things. The key process here is called *inference*. An

inference is additional information used by the listener to create a connection between what is said and what must be meant. In the last example, the listener has to operate with the inference: "if X is the name of the writer of a book, then X can be used to identify a copy of a book by that writer." Similar types of inferences are necessary to understand someone who says that *Picasso is in the museum or We saw Shakespeare in London or Jennifer is wearing Calvin Klein.*

Anaphora:

We usually make a distinction between introducing new referents (a puppy) and referring back to them (the puppy, it).

We saw a funny home video about a boy washing ***a puppy*** *in a small bath.*

The puppy *started struggling and shaking and the boy got really wet.*

When he let go, ***it*** *jumped out of the bath and ran away.*

In this type of referential relationship, the second (or subsequent) referring expression is an example of *anaphora* ("referring back"). The first mention is called the *antecedent*. So, in our example, a boy, a puppy and a small bath are antecedents and The puppy, the boy, he, it and the bath are anaphoric expressions.

Presupposition:

When we use a referring expression like this, *he* or *Shakespeare*, we usually assume that our listeners can recognize which referent is intended. In a more general way, we design our linguistic messages on the basis of large-scale assumptions about what our listeners already know. Some of these assumptions may be mistaken, of course, but mostly they're appropriate. What a speaker (or writer) assumes is true or known by a listener (or reader) can be described as a presupposition.

If someone tells you *Your brother is waiting outside*, there is an obvious presupposition that you have a brother. If you are asked *Why did you arrive late*?, there is a presupposition that you did arrive late. And if you are asked the question *When did you stop smoking*?, there are at least two presuppositions involved. In asking this question, the speaker presupposes that you used to smoke and that you no longer do so.

Speech acts:

We have been considering ways in which we interpret the meaning of an utterance in terms of what the speaker intended to convey. We have not yet considered the fact that we usually know how the speaker intends us to "take" (or "interpret the function of") what is said. In very general terms, we can usually recognize the type of "action" performed by a speaker with the utterance. We use the term speech act to describe actions such as "*requesting," "commanding," "questioning*" or "*informing*." We can define a speech act as the action performed by a speaker with an utterance. If you say, *I'll be there at six*, you are not just speaking, you seem to be performing the speech act of "promising."

We usually use certain syntactic structures with the functions listed beside them in the following table.

	Structures	**Functions**
Did you eat the pizza?	Interrogative	Question
Eat the pizza (please)!	Imperative	Command (Request)
You ate the pizza.	Declarative	Statement

When an interrogative structure such as *Did you…?, Are they…? or Can we…?* is used with the function of a question, it is described as a *direct speech act*. For example, when we don't know something and we ask someone to provide the information, we usually produce a direct speech act such as *Can you ride a bicycle?*

Compare that utterance with *Can you pass the salt?.* In this second example, we are not really asking a question about someone's ability. In fact, we don't normally use this structure as a question at all. We normally use it to make a request. That is, we are using a syntactic structure associated with the function of a question, but in this case with the function of a request. This is an example of *an indirect speech act*. Whenever one of the structures in the set above is used to perform a function other than the one listed beside it on the same line, the result is an indirect speech act.

Politeness:

We can think of politeness in general terms as having to do with ideas like being tactful,

modest and nice to other people. In the study of linguistic politeness, the most relevant

concept is "face." Your **face**, in pragmatics, is your public self-image. This is the emotional and social sense of self that everyone has and expects everyone else to recognize. *Politeness* can be defined as showing awareness and consideration of another person's face.

If you say something that represents a threat to another person's self-image, that is called a *face-threatening act*. For example, if you use a direct speech act to get someone to do something (*Give me that paper*!), you are behaving as if you have more social power than the other person. If you don't actually have that social power (e.g. you're not a military officer), then you are performing a *face*

threatening act. An indirect speech act, in the form associated with a question (*Could you pass me that paper*?), removes the assumption of social power. You're only asking if it's possible. This makes your request less threatening to the other person's face. Whenever you say something that lessens the possible threat to another's face, it can be described as a *face-saving act.*

Negative and positive face:

We have both a negative face and a positive face. (Note that "negative" doesn't mean "bad" here, it's simply the opposite of "positive.") Negative face is the need to be independent and free from imposition. Positive face is the need to be connected, to belong, to be a member of the group. So, a face-saving act that emphasizes a person's negative face will show concern about imposition (*I'm sorry to bother you…*; *I know you're busy, but…).* A face-saving act that emphasizes a person's positive face will show solidarity and draw attention to a common goal (*Let's do this together…; You and I have the same problem, so…).*

Lecture 10

Discourse analysis.

- Meaning:
- Cohesion:
- Coherence:
- Speech events:
- Conversation analysis:
- Co-operative principle:
- Hedges:
- implicatures:
- Background Knowledge:
- Schemas and scripts:
- When we ask how we make sense of what we read, how we can recognize well constructed texts as opposed to those that are jumbled or incoherent, how we understand speakers who communicate more than they say, and how we successfully take part in that complex activity called conversation, we are undertaking what is known as discourse analysis.

Cohesion:

We know, for example, that texts must have a certain structure that depends on factors quite different from those required in the structure of a single sentence. Some of those factors are described in terms of cohesion, or the ties and connections that exist within texts. A number of those types of cohesive ties can be identified in the following paragraph.

My father once bought a Lincoln convertible. He did it by saving every penny he could. That car would be worth a fortune nowadays. However, he sold it to help pay for my college education. Sometimes I think I'd rather have the convertible.

There are connections present here in the use of words to maintain reference to the same people and things throughout: father – he – he – he; my – my – I; Lincoln – it. There are connections between phrases such as: a Lincoln convertible – that car – the convertible. There are more general connections created by a number of terms that share a common element of meaning, such as "money" (bought – saving – penny – worth a fortune – sold – pay) and "time" (once – nowadays – sometimes). There is also a connector (However) that marks the relationship of what follows to what went before. The verb tenses in the first four sentences are all in the past, creating a connection between those events, and a different time is indicated by the present tense of the final sentence

Analysis of these cohesive ties within a text gives us some insight into how writers structure what they want to say. An appropriate number of cohesive ties may be a crucial factor in our judgments on whether something is well written or not. It has also been noted that the conventions of cohesive structure differ from one language to the next and may be one of the sources of difficulty encountered in translating texts. However, by itself, cohesion would not be sufficient to enable us to make sense of

what we read. It is quite easy to create a highly cohesive text that has a lot of connections between the sentences, but is very difficult to interpret. Note that the following text has connections such as Lincoln – the car, red – that color, her – she, letters – a letter, and so on.

My father bought a Lincoln convertible. The car driven by the police was red. That color doesn't suit her. She consists of three letters. However, a letter isn't as fast as a telephone call.

It becomes clear from this type of example that the "connectedness" we experience in our interpretation of normal texts is not simply based on connections between the words. There must be some other factor that leads us to distinguish connected texts that make sense from those that do not. This factor is usually described as "coherence."

Coherence:

The key to the concept of coherence ("everything fitting together well") is not something that exists in words or structures, but something that exists in people. It is people who "make sense" of what they read and hear.

Speech events

In exploring what it is we know about taking part in conversation, or any other speech event (e.g. debate, interview, various types of discussions), we quickly realize that there is enormous variation in what people say and do in different circumstances. In order to begin to describe the sources of that variation, we would have to take account of a number of criteria. For example, we would have to specify the roles of speaker and hearer(or hearers) and their relationship(s), whether they were friends, strangers, men, women, young, old, of equal or unequal status, and many other factors. All of these factors will have an influence on what is said and how it is said. We would have to describe what the topic of conversation was and in what setting it took place.

Conversation analysis:

In simple terms, English conversation can be described as an activity in which, for the most part, two or more people take turns at speaking. Typically, only one person speaks at a time and there tends to be an avoidance of silence between speaking turns. (This is not true in all situations or societies.) If more than one participant tries to talk at the same time, one of them usually stops, as in the following example, where A stops until B has finished.

A: Didn't you [know wh-

B: [But he must've been there by two

A: Yes but you knew where he was going

For the most part, participants wait until one speaker indicates that he or she has finished, usually by signaling a completion point. Speakers can mark their turns as complete in a number of ways: by asking a question, for example, or by pausing at the end of a completed syntactic structure like a phrase or sentence. Other participants can indicate that they want to take the speaking turn, also in a number of ways. They can start to make short sounds, usually repeated, while the speaker is talking, and often use body shifts or facial expressions to signal that they have something to say.

Co-operative principle:

The co-operative principle is stated in the following way: "Make your conversational contribution such as is required, at the stage at which it occurs, by the accepted purpose or direction of

the talk exchange in which you are engaged" (Grice, 1975: 45). Supporting this principle are four maxims, often called the "Gricean maxims."

The Quantity maxim: Make your contribution as informative as is required, but not more, or less, than is required.

The Quality maxim: Do not say that which you believe to be false or for which you lack adequate evidence.

The Relation maxim: Be relevant.

The Manner maxim: Be clear, brief and orderly.

Hedges:

We use certain types of expressions, called hedges, to show that we are concerned about following the maxims while being co-operative participants in conversation. Hedges can be defined as words or phrases used to indicate that we're not really sure that what we're saying is sufficiently correct or complete. We can use sort of or kind of as hedges on the accuracy of our statements, as in descriptions such as *His hair was kind of long or The book cover is sort of yellow* (rather than It is yellow). These are examples of hedges on the Quality maxim. Other examples would include the expressions listed below that people sometimes put at the beginning of their conversational contributions.

As far as I know …,

Now, correct me if I'm wrong, but …

I'm not absolutely sure, but ….

We also take care to indicate that what we report is something we think or feel (not know), is possible or likely (not certain), and may or could (not must) happen. Hence the difference between saying Jackson is guilty and I think it's possible that Jackson maybe guilty. In the first version, we will be assumed to have very good evidence for the statement.

implicatures:

CAROL: Are you coming to the party tonight?

LARA: I've got an exam tomorrow.

On the face of it, Lara's statement is not an answer to Carol's question. Lara doesn't say Yes or No. Yet Carol will immediately interpret the statement as meaning "No" or "Probably not." How can we account for this ability to grasp one meaning from a sentence that, in a literal sense, means something else? It seems to depend, at least partially, on the assumption that Lara is being relevant and informative, adhering to the maxims of Relation and Quantity. (To appreciate this point, try to imagine

Carol's reaction if Lara had said something like Roses are red, you know.) Given that Lara's original answer contains relevant information, Carol can work out that "exam tomorrow" conventionally involves "study tonight," and "study tonight" precludes "party tonight." Thus, Lara's answer is not simply a statement about tomorrow's activities, it contains an implicature (an additional conveyed meaning) concerning tonight's activities.

Background Knowledge:

John was on his way to school last Friday.

He was really worried about the math lesson.

Most people who are asked to read these sentences report that they think John is probably a schoolboy. Since this piece of information is not directly stated in the text, it must be an inference. Other inferences, for different readers, are that John is walking or that he is on a bus. These inferences are clearly derived from our conventional knowledge, in our culture, about "going to school," and no reader has ever suggested that John is swimming or on a boat, though both are physically possible, if unlikely, interpretations.

An interesting aspect of the reported inferences is that they are treated as likely or possible interpretations that readers will quickly abandon if they do not fit in with some subsequent information. Here is the next sentence in the text.

Last week he had been unable to control the class.

On encountering this sentence, most readers decide that John is, in fact, a teacher and that he is not very happy. Many report that he is probably driving a car to school.

Schemas and scripts:

A schema is a general term for a conventional knowledge structure that exists in memory. We were using our conventional knowledge of what a school classroom is like, or a "classroom schema," as we tried to make sense of the previous example. We have many schemas (or schemata) that are used in the interpretation of what we experience and what we hear or read about. If you hear someone describe what happened during a visit to a supermarket, you don't have to be told what is normally found in a supermarket. You already have a "supermarket schema" (food displayed on shelves, arranged in aisles, shopping carts and baskets, check-out counter, and other conventional features) as part of your background knowledge.

Similar in many ways to a schema is a script. A script is essentially a dynamic schema. That is, instead of the set of typical fixed features in a schema, a script has a series of conventional actions that take place. You have a script for "Going to the dentist" and another script for "Going to the movies." We all have versions of an "Eating in a restaurant" script, which we can activate to make sense of this short text.

Schemas and scripts:

Trying not to be out of the office for long, Suzy went into the nearest place, sat down and ordered an avocado sandwich. It was quite crowded, but the service was fast, so she left a good tip. Back in the office, things were not going well.

On the basis of our restaurant script, we would be able to say a number of things about the scene and events briefly described in this short text. For example, although the text doesn't have this information, we would assume that Suzy opened a door to get into the restaurant, that there were tables there, that she ate the sandwich, then she paid for it, and so on. The fact that information of this type can turn up in people's attempts to remember the text is further evidence of the existence of scripts. It is also a good indication of the fact that our understanding of what we read doesn't come directly from what words and sentences are on the page, but the interpretations we create, in our minds, of what we read.

Lecture 11

First language Acquisition

- Acquisition:
- Input :
- The acquisition schedule:
- I. Cooing and babbling:
- II. The one-word stage:
- III. The two-word stage:
- IV. Telegraphic speech:
- Developing morphology:
- Developing syntax:
- Forming questions:
- Forming negatives:

Acquisition:

The process of language acquisition has some basic requirements. During the first two or three years of development, a child requires interaction with other language-users in order to bring the general language capacity into contact with a particular language such as English.

The child must also be physically capable of sending and receiving sound signals in a language. All infants make “cooing” and “babbling” noises during their first year, but congenitally deaf infants stop after about six months.

Input:

Under normal circumstances, human infants are certainly helped in their language acquisition by the typical behavior of older children and adults in the home environment who provide language samples, or input, for the child. Adults such as mom, dad and the grandparents tend not to address the little creature before them as if they are involved in normal adult-to-adult conversation.

There does seem to be a lot of this: Oh, goody, now Daddy push choo-choo? The characteristically simplified speech style adopted by someone who spends a lot of time interacting with a young child is called caregiver speech.

baby talk child’s environment (choo-choo, poo-poo, pee-pee, wa-wa).

Input:

Built into a lot of caregiver speech is a type of conversational structure that seems to assign an interactive role to the young child even before he or she becomes a speaking participant. If we look at an extract from the speech of a mother to her child (aged 1 year 1 month) as if it were a two-party conversation, then this type of structuring becomes apparent. Notice how the mother reacts to the child’s actions and vocalizations as if they were turns in the conversation. (This example is from Brunner, 1983.)

MOTHER: Look!

CHILD: (touches pictures)

MOTHER: What are those?

CHILD: (vocalizes a babble string and smiles)

MOTHER: Yes, there are rabbits.

CHILD: (vocalizes, smiles, looks up at mother)

MOTHER: (laughs) Yes, rabbit.

CHILD: (vocalizes, smiles)

MOTHER: Yes. (laughs)

Input:

Caregiver speech is also characterized by simple sentence structures and a lot of repetition. If the child is indeed in the process of working out a system of putting sounds and words together, then these simplified models produced by the interacting adult may serve as good clues to the basic structural organization involved. Moreover, it has generally been observed that the speech of those regularly interacting with very young children changes and becomes more elaborate as the child begins using more and more language. Several stages in the early acquisition process have been identified.

The acquisition schedule:

All normal children develop language at roughly the same time, along much the same schedule. Since we could say the same thing for sitting up, crawling, standing, walking, using the hands and many other physical activities, it would seem that the language acquisition schedule has the same basis as the biologically determined development of motor skills. This biological schedule is tied very much to the maturation of the infant's brain.

During the first three months, the child develops a range of crying styles, with different patterns for different needs, produces big smiles in response to a speaking face, and starts to create distinct vocalizations.

I. Cooing and babbling:

The earliest use of speech-like sounds has been described as cooing. During the first few months of life, the child gradually becomes capable of producing sequences of vowel-like sounds, particularly high vowels similar to [i] and [u]. By four months of age, the developing ability to bring the back of the tongue into regular contact with the back of the palate allows the infant to create sounds similar to the velar consonants [k] and [g], hence the common description as "cooing" or "gooing" for this type of production. Speech perception studies have shown that by the time they are five months old, babies can already hear the difference between the vowels [i] and [a] and discriminate between syllables like [ba] and [ga].

Between six and eight months, the child is sitting up and producing a number of different vowels and consonants, as well as combinations such as ba-ba-ba and ga-ga-ga. This type of sound production is described as babbling In the later babbling stage, around nine to ten months, there are recognizable intonation patterns to the consonant and vowel combinations being produced, as well as variation in the combinations such as ba-ba-da-da. Nasal sounds also become more common and certain syllable sequences such as ma-ma-ma and da-da-da are occurred and interpreted by parents as versions of "mama" and "dada" and repeated back to the child.

As children begin to pull themselves into a standing position during the tenth and eleventh months, they become capable of using their vocalizations to express emotions and emphasis. This late babbling stage is characterized by more complex syllable combinations (ma-da-ga-ba), a lot of sound-play and attempted imitations. This "pre-language" use of sound provides the child with some

experience of the social role of speech because adults tend to react to the babbling, however incoherent, as if it is actually the child's contribution to social interaction.

II. The one-word stage:

Between twelve and eighteen months, children begin to produce a variety of recognizable single-unit utterances. This period, traditionally called the one-word stage, is characterized by speech in which single terms are uttered for everyday objects such as "milk," "cookie," "cat," "cup" and "spoon" (usually pronounced [pun]). Other forms such as [ʌs.] may occur in circumstances that suggest the child is producing a version of What's that, so the label "one-word" for this stage may be misleading and a term such as "single-unit" would be more accurate. We sometimes use the term holophrastic (meaning a single form functioning as a phrase or sentence) to describe an utterance that could be analyzed as a word, a phrase, or a sentence.

While many of these holophrastic utterances seem to be used to name objects, they may also be produced in circumstances that suggest the child is already extending their use. An empty bed may elicit the name of a sister who normally sleeps in the bed, even in the absence of the person named. During this stage, then, the child may be capable of referring to Karen and bed, but is not yet ready to put the forms together to produce a more complex phrase. Well, it is a lot to expect from someone who can only walk with a stagger and has to come down stairs backwards.

III. The two-word stage:

the two-word stage can begin around eighteen to twenty months, as the child's vocabulary moves beyond fifty words. By the time the child is two years old, a variety of combinations, similar to baby chair, mommy eat, cat bad, will usually have appeared. The adult interpretation of such combinations is, of course, very much tied to the context of their utterance. The phrase baby chair may be taken as an expression of possession (= this is baby's chair), or as a request (= put baby in chair), or as a statement (= baby is in the chair), depending on different circumstances.

Whatever it is that the child actually intends to communicate through such expressions, the significant functional consequences are that the adult behaves as if communication is taking place. That is, the child not only produces speech, but also receives feedback confirming that the utterance worked as a contribution to the interaction. Moreover, by the age of two, whether the child is producing 200 or 300 distinct "words," he or she will be capable of understanding five times as many, and will typically be treated as an entertaining conversational partner by the principal caregiver.

IV. Telegraphic speech:

Between two and two-and-a-half years old, the child begins producing a large number of utterances that could be classified as "multiple-word" speech. The salient feature of these utterances ceases to be the number of words, but the variation in word forms that begins to appear. Before we investigate this development, we should note a stage that is described as telegraphic speech. This is

characterized by strings of words (lexical morphemes) in phrases or sentences such as this shoe all wet, cat drink milk and daddy go bye-bye. The child has clearly developed some sentence building capacity by this stage and can get the word order correct.

While this type of telegram-format speech is being produced, a number of grammatical inflections begin to appear in some of the word forms and simple prepositions (in, on) are also used. By the age of two-and-a-half, the child's vocabulary is expanding rapidly and the child is initiating more talk while increased physical activity includes running and jumping. By three, the vocabulary has grown to hundreds of words and pronunciation has become closer to the form of adult language. At this point, it is worth considering what kind of influence the adults have in the development of the child's speech.

Developing morphology:

By the time a child is two-and-a-half years old, he or she is going beyond telegraphic speech forms and incorporating some of the inflectional morphemes that indicate the grammatical function of the nouns and verbs used. The first to appear is usually the -ing form in expressions such *as cat sitting* and *mommy reading book*. The next morphological development is typically the marking of regular plurals with the -s form, as in boys and cats. Finally, the regular -s marker on third person singular present-tense verbs appears. It occurs first with full verbs (comes, looks) and then with auxiliaries (does, has).

Developing syntax:

The child understands what the adult is saying. She/he just has her/his own way of expressing it. (imitation)

Forming questions:

In forming questions, the child's first stage has two procedures. Simply add a Wh-form (Where, Who) to the beginning of the expression or utter the expression with a rise in intonation towards the end, as in these examples:

Where kitty? Doggie?

Where horse go? Sit chair?

In the second stage, more complex expressions can be formed, but the rising intonation strategy continues to be used. It is noticeable that more Wh-forms come into use, as in these examples:

What book name? You want eat?

Why you smiling? See my doggie?

In the third stage, the required movement of the auxiliary in English questions (I can have … ! Can I have …?) becomes evident in the child's speech, but doesn't automatically spread to all Wh-question types. In fact, some children beginning school in their fifth or sixth year may still prefer to form Wh questions (especially with negatives) without the type of inversion found in adult speech (e.g. Why kitty can't …? instead of Why can't kitty …?). Apart from these problems with Wh-questions and continuing trouble with the morphology of verbs (e.g. Did I caught …? instead of Did I catch … ?), Stage 3 questions are generally quite close to the adult model, as in these examples:

Can I have a piece? Did I caught it?

Will you help me? How that opened?

What did you do? Why kitty can't stand up?

Forming negatives:

In the case of negatives, Stage 1 seems to involve a simple strategy of putting No or Not at the beginning, as in these examples:

no mitten - not a teddy bear - no fall - no sit there

In the second stage, the additional negative forms don't and can't appear, and with no and not, are increasingly used in front of the verb rather than at the beginning of the sentence, as in these examples:

He no bite you - I don't want it

That not touch - You can't dance

The third stage sees the incorporation of other auxiliary forms such as didn't and won't while the typical Stage 1 forms disappear. A very late acquisition is the negative form isn't, with the result that some Stage 2 forms (with not instead of isn't) continue to be used for quite a long time, as in the examples:

I didn't caught it - He not taking it

She won't let go - This not ice cream