**The Nature and Function of Language**

*Coursework for Week 2 and 3*

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| An English speaker’s knowledge includes the sound sequences of the English language. When new products are put on the market, the manufacturers have to create new names for them that conform to the allowable sound patterns of the language. Suppose you were hired by a manufacturer of soap products to name five new products. What names might you come up with? List them and explain the reasoning behind your sound choices. | A small set of words in languages ‘imitate’ what they refer to. Construct a list of ten new onomatopoeic words. Test them on at least five friends to see if they are truly non-arbitrary as to sound and meaning. Do not tell your friends what they denote, but ask them what they assume that it means. | Although sounds and meanings of most words in all languages are arbitrarily related, there are some communication systems in which the ‘signs’ unambiguously reveal their ‘meaning’.   1. Describe five different signs that directly show what they mean. 2. Describe any other communication systems that, like language, consists of arbitrary symbols | Using the eight imaginary words below, order each pair according to ‘heavier’ or ‘lighter’. Do not think about this at all; just pronounce each pair of words to yourself and put down your first, intuitive reaction.   1. lat or loat 2. foon or feen 3. mobe or meeb 4. toos or tace 5. fleen or feen 6. seeg or sleeg 7. poas or poat 8. toos or tood | A wolf is able to express subtle gradations of emotion by different positions of the ears, the lips and the tail. There are 11 postures of the tail that express such emotions as self-confidence, confident threat, lack of tension, uncertain threat, active submission and complete submission. This system seems to be complex. Suppose there were a thousand different emotions that the wolf could express in this way. Would you then say a wolf had a language similar to a human’s? Give reasons for your answer. | **5 points** |
| The following sentences are from Esperanto, an artificial language. English translations are given. Make a list of the Esperanto words, with their translations, and then divide them into morphemes. Specify the meaning of each morpheme.   1. Mi kusas sur la liton.   *I sleep on the bed.*   1. Mi kusas su la plankon.   *I sleep on the floor.*   1. La infano kusas sur la liton.   *The child sleeps on the bed.*   1. Mi kusis su la liton.   *I slept on the bed.*   1. La infanoj kusis sur la liton.   *The children slept on the bed.* | The words listed below are all from English. Divide them into morphemes and state the meanings of each.   1. house, trees, walking, water, waiter, friendly 2. unpacking, indisputable, abandonment, emphasis, misunderstanding, unkindness, friendship 3. philodendron, telegraph, telephone, anthropology, theology, locomotive, automobile | Consider the following sentences. Put an asterisk (\*) next to those that do not seem to conform to the rules or your grammar. St ate why these, in your opinion, are ungrammatical.   1. Robin forced the sheriff go. 2. Elizabeth is resembled by Charles. 3. That birds can fly amazes. 4. What did the Alice eat the toadstool with? 5. He came by a large sum of money. 6. I was surprised for you to get married. 7. The fact that you are late to class is surprising. | Select a language other than English and compare this language to English. Write a 300 word paragraph about the cultural, phonological, morphological and lexical differences between the two languages. | Classify the underlined words in Jabberwocky, according to word class e.g. adjective, verb, noun etc.  For additional assistance, refer to the word class summary sheets under Week 1 and 2. | **10 points** |
| Look at the following Esperanto sentences and their translations:   1. mi vidas la knabon.   *I see the boy.*   1. Min vidas la knabo.   *The boy sees me.*   1. La knabo vidas min.   *The boy sees me.*   1. La knabo min vidas.   *The boy sees me.*   1. Mi la knabon vidas.   *I see the boy.*   1. Vidas mi la knobon.   *I see the boy.*   1. La knabon vidas mi.   *I see the boy.*   1. La knabon mi vidas.   *I see the boy.*  The system for marking subject/object case relationships in Esperanto is clearly very different from that of English. State how Esperanto distinguishes subjects and objects and explain the effect this has on sentence structure. | Consider these two statements: ‘I learnt a new word today.’ And ‘I learnt a new sentence today.’ Do you think the two statements are equally probable? Write a 400 word response that explores your thoughts on this question. | Read the article from the Scientific American. Write a 400 word argument in favour or against the notion of linguistic determinism. | Watch the TED video about dolphin language (Denise Herzing – Could we speak the language of dolphins?). Write a 400 word response to the question: ‘Is it possible to communicate with other species?’ | Using your results from the activity above, explain your process of classification, specifically addressing syntax and how this contributes to understanding. | **15**  **points** |
| Using the information from the exercise above, write translations into Esperanto for the English sentences below.   1. The cow sees the child. 2. The cows see the children. 3. The boy will fear the bull. 4. I will see the beds. 5. The boys slept on the floor. | Create a language that follows the ten rules of communication, universal to all languages. Using this language, translate the following sentences.   1. I thought I saw the bird. 2. The bird is over the tree. 3. She thought about him yesterday. 4. A bird flew over the tree. | Design a 3D model of the organs involved in speech. It must demonstrate the movement necessary to create speech. Label all of the segments involved in speech making. | In pairs, present a five minute debate that explores the statement, ‘Body language is more important than spoken language.’ You must include a rebuttal section. | Write two extra verses for Jabberwocky in the style of Lewis Carroll. You must use at least 10 of the nonsensical words that he employs and his lyrical style. | **20**  **points** |

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| **understanding** |
| **analysing** |
| **evaluating** |
| **creating** |

**Due Date: Friday, 14th of February, 3pm**