LIN 001: Introduction to Linguistics (Spring 2024)

Week 1 (Introductory Concepts) - Sections A05 and A06

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Question 1

1. Define language and define linguistics.

      - See Week 1 slides (# 3, 5, 8, 17)

      - Slides 8 and 17 are especially important.

Question 2

2. Name at least 3 functions of language.

        - See Week 1 slides (# 8)

Question 3

3. Do animals have language? Explain your reasons.

     - <u>Important Key Terms:</u> duality of patterning, open-endedness, displacement
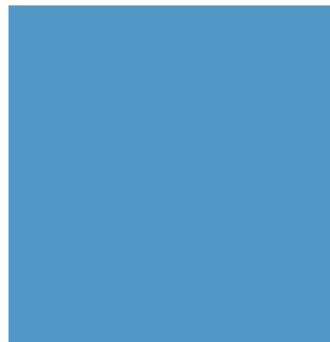
     - See Week 1 slides (# 9-11)

Question 3 Practice

3. Explain why the scenario depicted below is not an example of language. Use the terms "duality of patterning", "open-endedness", and "displacement".

Q4 Prelude: Sapir-Whorf Hypothesis and Colors

- Sapir-Whorf Hypothesis (SWH): "Language influences how we conceptualize things and events" (also known as the Linguistic Relativity Hypothesis).

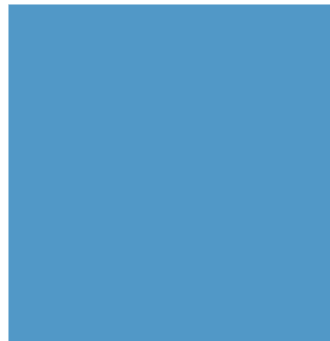- ex. Russian and English differ in their use of color terms

Russian: *goluboy*
English: *blue*

Russian: *siniy*
English: *blue*

Q4 Prelude: Sapir-Whorf Hypothesis and Colors

- Strong Version of SWH: English doesn't have separate words for "light blue" and "dark blue", so English speakers cannot distinguish the two colors.

    - Is this true? **…No.**

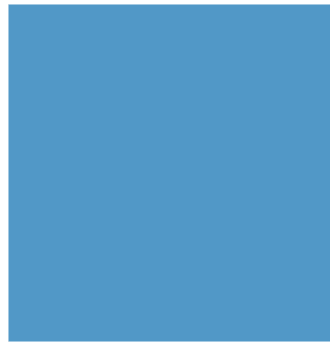Russian: *goluboy*
English: *blue*

Russian: *siniy*
English: *blue*

Q4 Prelude: Sapir-Whorf Hypothesis and Colors

- Weak Version of SWH: English doesn't have separate words for "light blue" and "dark blue", so English speakers they have a harder time distinguishing the two colors than Russian speakers.

- Is this true? …Possibly Yes (SWH is controversial).

Russian: *goluboy*
English: *blue*
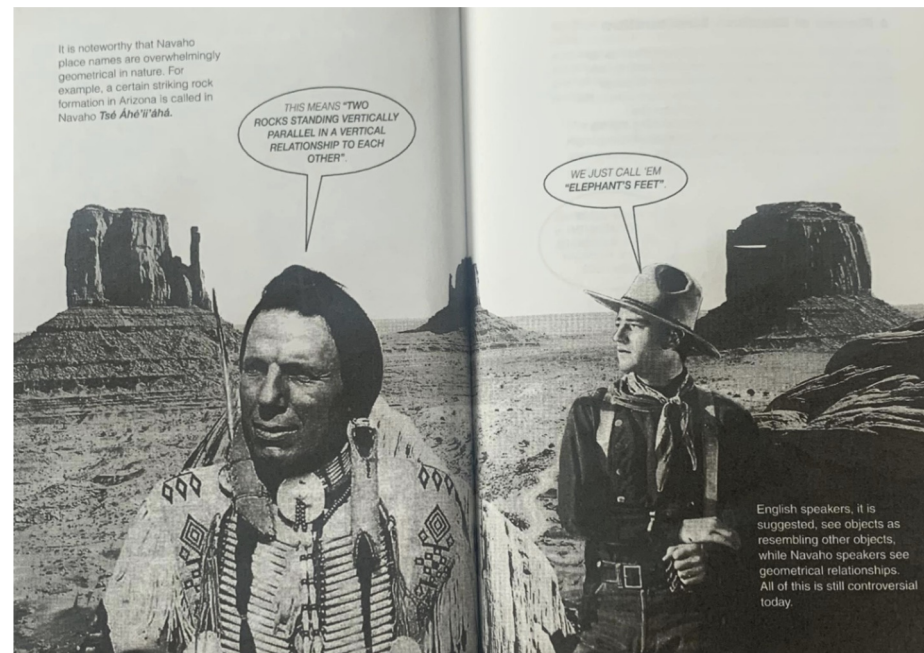
Russian: *siniy*
English: *blue*

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Question 4

4. What is the Sapir-Whorf Hypothesis? Explain and illustrate using English vs. Navajo examples of spatial conceptualization.

- Sapir-Whorf Hypothesis: "Language influences how we conceptualize things and events" (aka Linguistic Relativity Hypothesis).

- Although the strong version of the hypothesis is unsupported, we know that "Our language at least partially influences the way we perceive the world".

- See Week 1 slides (# 20-27), especially #21.

- For more info about SWH and colors, see 10th edition of the textbook (pages 21-25; "An Introduction to Language", by Fromkin, Rodman, Hyams)

Question 4

4. What is the Sapir-Whorf Hypothesis? Explain and illustrate using English vs. Navajo examples of spatial conceptualization.

Question 5

5. Give 3 examples of words with culture-specific meaning and explain what they tell us about the cultures they come from (e.g. siesta, haram, burek).

       - See Week 1 slides (# 28)

Question 6

6. What is the Indo-European family and what three groups of languages do you know that belong to it?

- See Week 1 slides (# 33)

Question 7

7. What are the two main two-way distinctions that de Saussure (the "father" of modern linguistics) introduced?

        - See Week 1 slides (# 37)
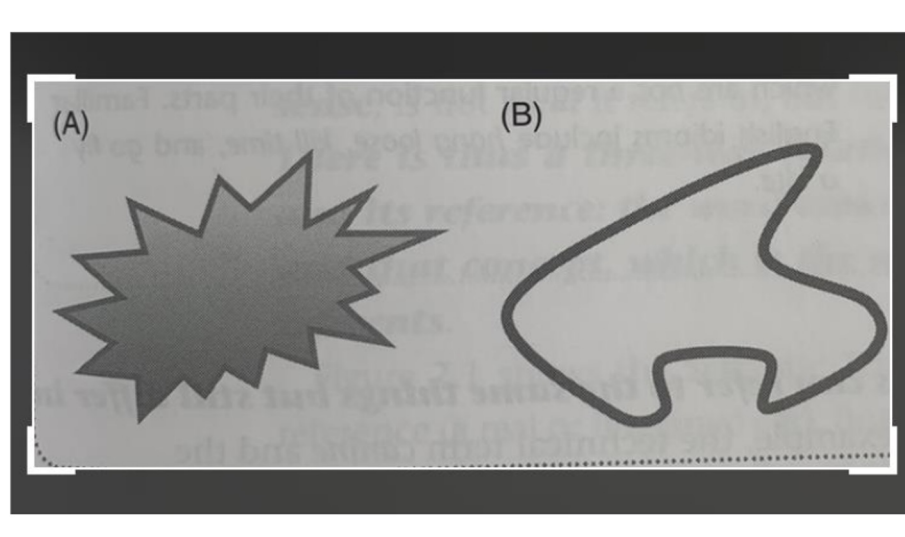
Question 8

8. Name and briefly explain levels of linguistic analysis (phonetics to discourse).

       - See Week 1 slides (# 4)

Question 9

9. Use the example of baluba vs. takete sound sequences to explain why some sound-meaning relationship in language are not arbitrary.

       - See Week 1 slides (# 18)

Question 9 Practice

9. What are some other examples of non-arbitrary sound sequences? (Hint: What sounds do cows and pigs make?)

- Onomatopoeia (moo, oink, etc.)

- Fun Fact: Cross-linguistic differences in onomatopoeia

Language	Cow Mooing	Pig Grunting
English	moo	oink
Czech	buu	chro chro
Dutch	boe	knor knor

https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Cross-linguistic_onomatopoeias

Question 10

10. Name at least two languages in the Indo-European family that are isolates (i.e., they do not belong to a group within the family but are on their own).

- See Week 1 slides (# 33)

Any questions, comments, or concerns?

Office Hours: Tuesday (10am-1pm), Thursday (1-4pm) in Kerr 261