

# Contents

<b>CHAPTER 1</b>	
What is Language?	1
<b>CHAPTER 2</b>	
Morphology: The Words of Language	10
<b>CHAPTER 3</b>	
Syntax: The Sentence Patterns of Language	20
<b>CHAPTER 4</b>	
The Meaning of Language	45
<b>CHAPTER 5</b>	
Phonetics: The Sounds of Language	62
<b>CHAPTER 6</b>	
Phonology: The Sound Patterns of Language	70
<b>CHAPTER 7</b>	
Language in Society	81
<b>CHAPTER 8</b>	
Language Change: The Syllables of Time	92
<b>CHAPTER 9</b>	
Language Acquisition	104
<b>CHAPTER 10</b>	
Language Processing and the Human Brain	110
<b>CHAPTER 11</b>	
Computer Processing of Human Language	124
<b>CHAPTER 12</b>	
Writing: The ABCs of Language	130



behavior. There is no creative aspect to the system: the dog could not associate a novel combination of cues with a complex action.

9. “*Correct*” rules of grammar. Here are some rules, often taught in English classes, which seem unnatural to many speakers:

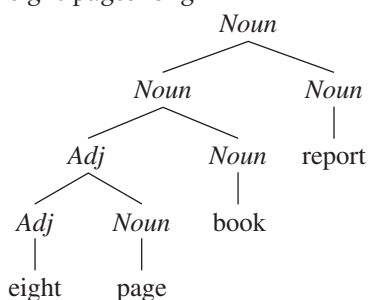
- a. Never end a sentence with a preposition. Yet *What are you putting those marbles into?* is more common and natural for the majority of English speakers (including teachers of English) than *Into what are you putting those marbles?* English grammar permits the splitting of prepositional phrases.
- b. Don’t split infinitives (i.e., don’t insert anything between the infinitive marker *to* and the verb). However, a sentence such as *He was the first one to successfully climb Mount Everest* is grammatical.
- c. Use *whom* rather than *who* when the pronoun is the object of a verb or preposition, e.g., *Whom (rather than who) did you meet yesterday?* While this may have been part of the mental grammar of English speakers in the past, for most dialects the syntax has changed and *Who did you meet yesterday?* is the grammatical or “acceptable” structure.

The essay may point out that a descriptive grammar describes speakers’ basic linguistic knowledge while a prescriptive grammar postulates a set of rules that are considered “correct.” Prescriptive grammarians often misunderstand the nature of language change and ignore the fact that all dialects are rule-governed and capable of expressing thought of any complexity.

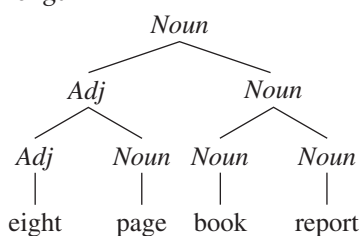
10. *Comments on Chomsky’s remark.* Chomsky believes that if apes were endowed with the ability to acquire language they would do so. The answer to this question should reflect an understanding of the studies presented in the chapter, which purport to show that the acquisition of language follows a pattern of development analogous to other kinds of biological development and is a result of a biological endowment specific to humans. The basis of the remark is in the fact that humans acquire language without instruction, while apes do not. (In fact, apes do not do so even with instruction.) The remark is also based on the assumption that the communication system used by apes is qualitatively different from human language; by “language ability” Chomsky means “human language ability.” The analogy to flightless birds implies that learning to speak a language is like learning to fly—it is a property of the species. A species of birds that does not fly simply does not have the biological endowment to do so. An excellent expansion of this answer may be found in some of the works listed the references for Chapter 1, including Anderson 2008 and Bickerton 1990.
11. *Song titles.* Answers will vary. Some examples are:
- “Somethin’ ‘Bout a Truck” — Kip Moore
  - “Why Ya Wanna” — Jana Kramer
  - “Lemme See” — Usher

15. *Eight-page book report.*

A report of unspecified length on a book that is eight pages long



A report that is eight pages long on a book of unspecified length



16. *Italian morphology.*

- a. The root morpheme meaning 'robust' is *robust*.
- b. The morpheme meaning 'very' is *-issimo*.
- c. (1) 'a robust wine' = *un vino robusto*  
 (2) 'a very red face' = *una faccia rossissima*  
 (3) 'a very dry wine' = *un vino seccissimo*

17. *Turkish morphology.*

- a. *-e*
- b. suffixes
- c. 'from an ocean' = *denizden*
- d. three (*deniz-im-de*)

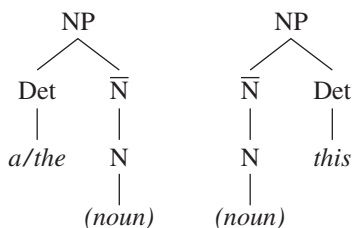
18. *Chickasaw morphology.*

- a. 1. 'to be tall' = *chaaha*  
 2. 'to be hungry' = *hopoba*
- b. 1. past tense = *-tok*  
 2. 'I' = *sa-*  
 3. 'you' = *chi-*  
 4. 'he/she' =  $\emptyset$ - (i.e., nothing)
- c. 1. 'you are old' = *chisipokni*  
 2. 'he was old' = *sipoknitok*  
 3. 'they are old' = *hoosipokni*

19. *Little-End Eglish.*

- i. The possessive morpheme is the prefix *z-*. The first person singular morpheme is the suffix *-ego*. The second person morpheme is suffix *-ivo*.
- ii. 'my egg white' = *zvelego*

complements to nouns in Tamil, so we cannot say whether NPs are head initial or head final in Tamil. The two possible structures we have for NPs in Tamil are:



18. Wh- movement. Sample answers:

a.

*what*

- i. What would the child like?
- ii. d-structure: The child would like what?

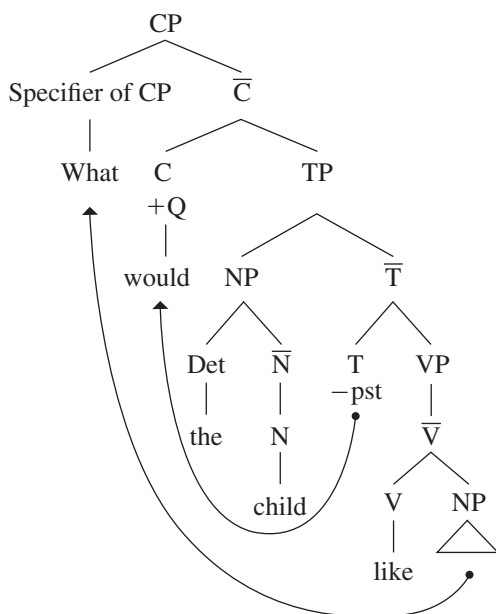
*which*

- i. Which color has Percy decided on?
- ii. d-structure: Percy has decided on which color?

*where*

- i. Where is Marcy going for her vacation?
- ii. d-structure: Marcy is going where for her vacation?

a. *Sample answer:*



- d. [p] and [b] represent separate phonemes and not allophones of one phoneme because their occurrence is not predictable and they are not in complementary distribution. Both sounds occur in phonetically similar environments.
- e. No, [ãmdãno] is not a possible phonetic form because [d] cannot follow [m] since sequences of a nasal consonant followed by a voiced oral consonant do not occur, and the place of articulation does not agree.
- f. Yes, there is a homorganic rule in Luganda.
- g. Phonemic: /enpo:be/ Phonetic: [empɔ:be]
- h. (i) /en/
- i. [ẽntabi]
- j. /akaugeni/
- k. Rule 1: Vowel nasalization: a vowel is nasalized when it precedes a nasal consonant.  
 Rule 2: Homorganic nasal rule: /n/ assimilates to the place of articulation of a following consonant.  
 Rule 3: Voiced stop assimilation: A voiced stop becomes a nasal if preceded by a nasal consonant.

17. *Japanese morphophonemics*. (Cf. exercise 10.)

- a.
 

'call'	/yob/
'write'	/kak/
'eat'	/tabe/
'see'	/mi/
'leave'	/de/
'go out'	/dekake/
'die'	/sin/
'close'	/sime/
'swindle'	/kata/
'wear'	/ki/
'read'	/yom/
'lend'	/kas/
'wait'	/mat/
'press'	/os/
'apply'	/ate/
'drop'	/otos/
'have'	/mot/
'win'	/kat/
'steal a lover'	/neto/
- b.
  - i. /t/ → [ts] / \_\_\_\_ [u]
  - ii. /t/ → [tʃ] / \_\_\_\_ [i]
  - iii. /s/ → [ʃ] / \_\_\_\_ [i]

Contraction of *what are you* to *watcha*.  
Substitution of less formal *are going to* for *will*.  
Contraction of *going to* to *gonna*.

- c. Him go to church? ← Does he go to church?  
Auxiliary *does* is dropped.  
Object pronoun *him* is substituted for subject pronoun *he*.
- d. There's four books there. ← There are four books there.  
Change of copula from plural *are* to singular *is*.  
Contraction of *there is* to *there's*.
- e. Who ya wanna go with? ← Who do you want to go with? (or) Whom do you want to go with? (or) With whom do you want to go?  
Preposition not fronted.  
Case ending on *who* dropped.  
Auxiliary *do* is dropped.  
Use of *ya* for *you*.  
*Want to* contracted to *wanna*.

9. *Jargon*. Answers to this exercise will naturally vary according to the profession or trade the student chooses to represent. The jargon listed here as a sample answer is taken from the field of academic professors at the University of California, Los Angeles.

*chair*—the head of a department

CV—curriculum vitae, the academic résumé

AA—administrative assistant

RA—research assistant

TA—teaching assistant

*post-doc (post-doctoral)*—a temporary job (usually one to five years) in research or teaching for someone who has just completed a doctorate.

ATC (*Advanced to Candidacy*)—the level of a student who has finished all requirements for a Ph.D. except a dissertation.

ABD (*All But Dissertation*)—same as ATC.

*sabbatical*—paid leave of absence, originally after six years of teaching, i.e., the seventh year.

FTE (*Full-Time Equivalency*)—a full time academic position in the university.

10. *Formal-colloquial translation*. Here is a sample “translation” of the first paragraph of the Declaration of Independence. There are varying degrees of informality in style that could be used in doing this exercise.

*When a group of people wants to break away from another group and form their own country (which they should have the right to do), they've got to say clearly what motivated the separation, if they've got any respect for the opinion of the rest of the world.*

5. *Garden Path Sentences*. The principle of minimal attachment can explain the asymmetry in the processing of these sentences.

- (1) *the message* is easily interpretable as the object of the verb *understood*, while *the snow* isn't.
- (2) *the mistake* is easily interpretable as the object of the verb *admitted*, while *the airplane* isn't.
- (3) *the large wolf* is easily interpretable as the object of the verb *feared* while *the dress* isn't.

6. *Priming*.

- (1) Answers will vary, but most people will probably “fall for it”. Priming is effective here for two reasons: (1) *yolk* is being primed with members of its phonological lexical neighborhood, and (2) most people don't know what the white of an egg is called; even if they do, *yolk* is a much more common word than *albumin*.
- (2) Answers will vary, but many people will likely not point out that survivors are not buried. Here the priming is not phonological but rather semantic: in the scenario of an airplane crash, all things semantically related to an airplane crash may be primed, including *survivors*. Even if you have been explicitly told that there are no survivors, this does not prevent the priming of this word. The priming of *survivors* facilitates the processing error that many will experience. If you asked them instead “. . . where will you bury the monkeys?”, a much higher percentage would most likely object and ask, “What monkeys?” as *monkey* is not semantically primed by the scenario of an airplane crash.

7. *The mind and lateralization*. Answers will vary. A student's essay might include some of the following:

Possible arguments for Sperry's position:

- Studies on split-brain patients demonstrate differentiation of functions of the right and the left hemispheres.
- Damage to the right hemisphere may result in nonlinguistic cognitive deficits, with language remaining largely intact. And conversely, left hemisphere damage frequently results in aphasia without necessarily affecting other cognitive functions. This argues for separate minds with separate functions.

Possible arguments for Eccles's position:

- Eccles must believe that thought cannot be expressed without language. If this is so, since only the left hemisphere is specialized for language, it can be argued that the right hemisphere cannot think.
- The left hemisphere is specialized not only for language but also for mathematical and some other cognitive abilities, which are purely human.