



Ιπποπόταμος
WoLLoW the HiPPo

The World of Languages and Languages of the World

What makes a language?

Let's explore how we learn a language and
what constitutes a language.

What are these babies saying?



- From watching this clip, what are the rules of conversation that these babies have already learnt?

- Are they already using a language?

- How are they communicating?

- https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=_UfFY6PSVu0



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What is a language?



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- A language...
- ... is made of sounds (can be heard)
- ... is made of words (can be written down)
- ... follows a set of rules
- ... is shaped by other languages
- ... is constantly changing
- ... other ideas?



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In linguistics we say...

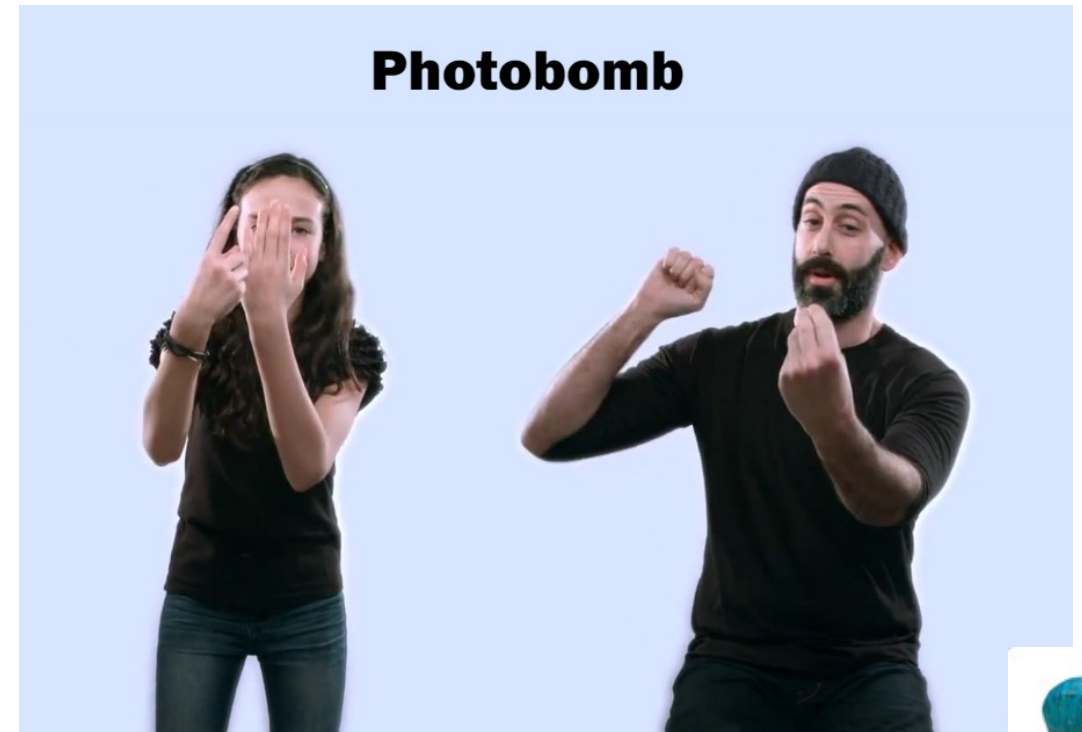
There are five main components of **language**:

1. **Phonemes** (a unit of sound *p*, *b*, *d*, and *t* in the English words *pad*, *pat*, *bad*, and *bat*)
2. **Morphemes** (a morpheme is the smallest meaningful unit in a language e.g. in-come-ing)
3. **Lexemes** (the basic unit of meaning e.g. "create" - it has a meaning when standing alone)
4. **Syntax** (set of rules, principles, and processes that govern the structure of sentences)
5. **Context** (how everything within **language** works together to convey a particular meaning)



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So are
these languages?



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Do you agree?



1. Speech makes us human.
2. We learn European languages in school because they are the most important.
3. English is the most important language.
4. Speaking one language perfectly is better than speaking two languages imperfectly.
5. If you speak with a strong accent, you won't get a good job.



Language acquisition – a skill we all have

- Before we are even born...
- Aged 1: can form between 10 and 20 intelligible words
- Aged 2: starting to put words together in pairs
- By age 5: can understand up to 5000 words
- By age 12: can understand 20,000 words



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How we learn a language.

Watch this clip from Albert Einstein
College of Medicine

Developmental Milestones: Baby Talk
from First Sounds to First Words

- <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=a7WAFwKi88Q&t=21s>



More questions...

- Why is it easier to learn a foreign language when you're young?
- When do you think conversations start?
- How do babies learn a language?
- What do you think happened when babies learn two languages from birth?
- Why do we sing to babies?
- In what order do we learn a language?



A final thought...

How do you think we should we learn a language in the classroom?

1

2

3

4

5



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