

# Structure and meaning

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# Introductions

- Who am I?
- What is this module about?
- How is it going to run?

# Overview

- 1 The problem of language structure
- 2 Foundations
- 3 Structure in words
- 4 Structure in sentences

# The problem of language structure

- How would a Martian figure it out?
- 'John did go to the shop'
- Auxiliary verbs such as 'did' always come after the first word in a sentence

# The problem of language structure

- But what about...
- 'The man with the hat did go to the shop'
- We can't have 'The did man with the hat go to the shop'
- So how do we solve this problem?

# How do we solve this problem?

- Analytic philosophy
- Breaking language down into its smallest units of meaning...
- And building it back up again

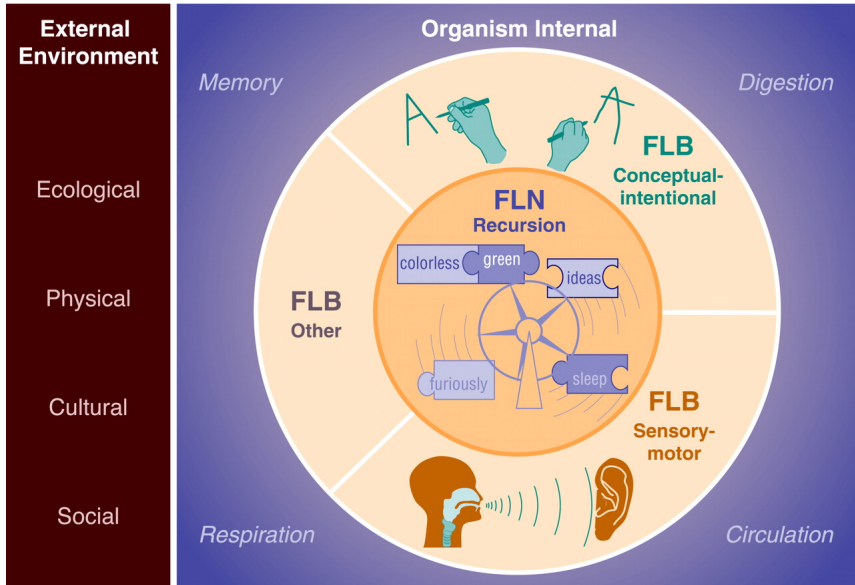
- Our intuitions are useful
- We know what sounds right, but we need to figure out why
- And when we say 'right' we mean what sounds right, not what we are told is right by dusty old grammar books...

# Where is language?

- I-language: the capabilities human beings have to construct linguistic structures in the brain (competence)
- E-language: the externalisation of language (e.g. things that speakers say, also known as utterances/performance)




# What is language?



# Morphology and meaning

# Syntax and meaning

 Hauser, M. D., Chomsky, N. & Fitch, W. T. (2002), 'The faculty of language: what is it, who has it, and how did it evolve?', *science* **298**(5598), 1569–1579.