Lecture Notes

* Languages
  + Grammar: Clear rules
    - Including syntax and morphology
  + Lexicon: Meaningful descriptions of the world
* Altruistic words have gone down in frequency and “selfish” words have gone up
  + Due to the cultural shift in the past couple of decades
* Why do we swear?
  + Swear words activate the Basal Ganglia
* Four types of swear words
  + The supernatural
    - Damn, hell, For Pete’s sake
  + Body effluvia and organs
    - Shit, piss, bloody
  + Disease, death, and sickness
    - “A pox on you”, “A plague ‘o both your houses”
      * Evokes emotions of dread
  + Sexuality
    - Fuck, dick, etc.
    - But: why should thoughts about sex trigger negative emotions?
    - Exploitation, illegitimacy, incest, jealousy, cuckoldry, desertion, abuse
* Dysphemistic Swearing
  + Euphemism: We have to talk about this for a while for specific purpose, but let’s avoid thinking about how awful it is
  + Dysphemism: I want you to think about just how awful this is
  + Shit vs. Feces, fuck vs. Copulate
* Emphatic Swearing
  + Express something brilliant
    - This is fucking awesome
  + Express negativity
    - He thinks he’s a fucking pro
* Cathartic Swearing
  + Rage-circuit theory:
    - Mammals: When suddenly injured, or confined, emit sudden angry noise to startle attacker
    - Humans: Also triggers language system – aggressive words with negative affect
      * Yelling and swearing during helps reduce pain
* Summary
  + Humans are pone to strong negative emotions
    - Awe of supernatural, disgust of body effluvia, dread of disease, revulsion
* Conclusion
  + 1. All species communicate is special
  + 2. It’s important

Tutorial Notes

* Language has three criteria
  + Arbitrary: Words do not indicate their meanings
  + Regular:
  + Productive:
* Grammar and syntax are the same thing
  + We can’t string together words
    - i.e. Milk in the Edwin spilled break room the
  + We can convey new ideas with the same vocabulary
* Morphemes
  + Smallest unit of sound that contains meaning
  + Transfers knowledge
    - i.e. Spiderweb 🡪 ‘Spider’ & ‘Web’
    - i.e. Cats 🡪 ‘Cat’ & ‘S’
* Phonemes
  + Smallest unit of sound
    - i.e. S/P/I/D/E/R/W/E/B
* Over-extension
  + Applying a rule to more than one scenario
    - i.e. I eated a sandwich 🡪 I ate a sandwich
* Social learning theory
  + Social interaction is required to develop language
* Innate mechanism theory
  + Can still develop language if no language is exposed to the child
* Children will pay more attention to language
  + Born with an inclination to language