

Introduction to Linguistics

Assignment 1

A For each of the following sentences, decide whether it is true or false and explain your decision in 1-2 sentences. Your explanation should include the relevant terms used in class.

1. The written language is the empirical basis for research in Modern Linguistics.
False Modern linguistics focuses primarily on spoken language, although not necessarily auditory language, as sign language is also included.
2. Traditional Linguistics determines normative rules for using a language.
True Traditional linguistics takes a *prescriptive* approach to linguistics and defines rules for how language should be used.
3. Every native speaker can speak, read, write and curse in his/her mother tongue.
False Illiterate people also have a native tongue. Reading (and cursing) are not requirements.
4. The origin of words is not part of the language faculty.
True Language faculty is what we know when we **know** a language. The origin of the words are external to that knowledge and may be studied as part of **historical linguistics** but are not directly linked to knowledge of a language.
5. Phonetics is a field that examines only the way linguistic sounds are produced.
False In phonetics we study how sounds are *produced* and *perceived*.

B Choose two linguistic phenomena. Describe them shortly (4-5 sentences), provide examples and determine to which field(s) they belong (they could be related to more than one field).

1. **Denominalization** - Turning nouns into verbs. This can be done using the noun unchanged as a verb, as with "Let us *workshop* this idea", or with adding a prefix or suffix, as in "Lets *verbify* these nouns". This is very common in Modern Hebrew, with words like *לסמס* or *סימסתי* for sending an instant message, or *שפעול* for turning nouns into verbs. This *verbification* is definitely part of the study of **morphology** as it has to do with word formation, and is not detached from the meaning of the word, so also would be studied in **semantics**.
2. **Code mixing** - Using constructs from one language when speaking another. This is common during the language development of bilingual children. This can be expressed using a word from another language in a sentence, such as "Who did you vote for i the *bechirot* last Tuesday?". It can alternatively be expressed as grammar from another language, as in "Look at that car purple", when in Hebrew the descriptive color would come after the noun, while in English it comes before. This would be studied as part of **language acquisition**.