Introduction to Linguistics

Assignment 3

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 terms 'competence' and 'langue' are synonyms.
   False Competence refers to what we know about language as *individuals*. Langue refers to what we know about language as a *society*.
2. A language that has expletive pronouns does not allow an empty subject position.
   True The parameters "There are expletive pronouns" and "It is possible to have an empty subject position" are a *Bundle of Parameters*. There is a tendency for them to appear together with the first implying the second.
3. The English pronoun it can only be used as an expletive pronoun.
   False "It" can refer to inanimate objects. For example: "The table is blue, and it is also tall" with "it" referring to "the table".
4. Both principles and parameters are innate according to Chomsky's theory.
   True With principle being *universal*, and parameters valued being filled out during language acquisition of a specific *particular grammar*.

B Choose two languages that you know and explain two grammatical differences between them. Phrase the differences as if they were parameters. Provide examples.

Example: word order - the adjective follows the noun _____.

The "value" would be "yes" in Hebrew and "no" in English (compare *sipurim arukim* and *long stories*).

- Nouns are gendered.
  The value would be "yes" in Hebrew and "no" in English. For example: in hebrew *rexev*, car, is masculine and would use the masculine adjective *gadol* to describe it, while *even*, rock, is feminine and would use the feminine adjective *gdola* to describe it. In English, those previous examples would not be gendered, and the neutral pronoun (that doesn't refer to people), it, would be used to refer to them.
- Verbs acquire quantity depending on the quantity of what they are describing
  The value would be "yes" in Hebrew and "no" in English. "Hen baot" - They are coming(feminine) vs "hee baa" - She is coming. In English we used the same word "coming" for both.