

Linguistics - Lesson 17 - 2023/01/05

ᲞᲞᲗᲗᲗᲗᲗᲗᲗᲗ

The syllable - cont.

Onset, nucleus, coda

markedness

distribution of different types of syllables

stress

Theoretical term. we don't speak in syllables

Some phonological processes are sensitive to syllables:

- Final devoicing

A consonant becomes -voice, but not as a result of assimilation

This process is sensitive to edges

- end of a word
- end of a syllable
- end of a morpheme

tov -> tof (yiddish)

Take the words:

kla

lka

Both words can theoretically exist in some language. There is a theoretical markedness between these words.

You can have a language with kla, or with kla and lka, but probably not only lka

sonority

+sonorant

-sonorant, obstruent

The more sonorant a phone is, the more acoustic energy they have.

The most sonorant phones are vowels > glides > liquids > nasals > fricatives, stop, affricate

The fricatives, stop, affricate are considered -sonorant and the others are considered +sonorant.

within each group there are different levels

When we examine different combinations of sound, linguists have reached the following generalization:

Sonority Sequence Generalization SSG (Sonority Sequence Principle SSP)

When we look at the syllable structure, the nucleus(usually a vowel), is the more sonorant element.

The nucleus and the coda are known as the rime.

When looking at the vowel structure (CVC), The sonority rises and then falls.

What happens when we have more than one consonant in the onset or coda position?

The general rule is that the sonority rises towards the nucleus and falls away from it.

kla is rising sonority, while lka zigzags, which tends to be rejected in many languages.

Ex. Hebrew:

shaxor (black) - shxora

katom (orange) - ktoma

lavan (white) - *lvana - levana

l is more sonorant than v, so lvana would violate the SSG.

k and t have the same degree of sonority, so ktoma has a plateau, but at least doesn't fall.

In some languages the SSG requires a rise, but in some languages, like Hebrew, a plateau is allowed.

The SSG states that sonority should not fall towards the nucleus, and according to the strict definition, it should rise.

This shows that the position of a consonant cluster within a syllable matters phonologically

clean vs silk

Semantics

The field that deals with meaning.

- meaning of words
- meaning of sentences

What is meaning? We will not answer this question in this class.

Let us distinguish between terms related to meaning:

- signifier - sequence of letters referring to a signified
- signified - the mental image in our mind
- reference - the actual object in the world - anything we can point to and say this is it

cat - word - idea - group of all cats

unicorn

we have a signifier

we have a signified

do we have a reference? Unclear, is a picture in a book a reference?

love

we have a signifier

we have a signified

What is the reference of love?

If you have an idea, but no word for it - then you have a signified, but no signifier.

If you have a word, but don't know its meaning, then you have no signified for that word.

What is the reference of a sentence?

john bought a car

- the event?

What is the reference of a lie?

Gottlob Frege

He came to the conclusion that the reference of a sentence is its **truth value**.

True or False.

In order to know the truth value, we have to understand the **meaning** of the sentence.

all the conditions under which the sentence is true.

We have to understand its **entailments**.

Semantics of truth values - deals with the logic of sentences and the relations between them.

The book that John wrote sold millions of copies.

This sentence has a truth value.

the meaning of the sentence has to be computed and all the conditions have to be true

- John has to exist
 - John wrote at least one book
 - This book sold at least a million copies
-

Entailment

$a \Rightarrow b$

a entails b if and only if in any situation where a is true b is true as well

a entails $b \iff$ in any situation where a is true b is true as well

a) Every student has a pen and a pencil

b) Every student has a pen

$a \rightarrow b$, but $b \not\rightarrow a$

c) Every student has a pen or a pencil

d) Every student has a pen

$c \not\rightarrow$, but $d \rightarrow c$

a) This is an elephant

b) This is white

c) This is a white elephant

$a \wedge b \rightarrow c$

a) this is a white elephant

b) An elephant is an animal

c) this is a white animal

$$a \wedge b \rightarrow c$$

e) This is a small elephant

f) An elephant is an animal

g) This is a small animal?

$$e \wedge f \not\rightarrow g$$

intersective vs relative adjectives/nouns.

intersective element can be grouped.

"All white objects in the world"

relative elements can not be grouped

"All small things in the world"

"All interesting things in the world"

"All animals in the world"

You cannot make an intersection between "small" which has no group, and "animal" which does.

a) John used to run 2 miles a day

b) John doesn't run two miles a day anymore

Does a entail b?

a) if you study, you will succeed

b) if you don't study, you won't succeed

a) John thinks he passed the test

b) John passed the test

Does a entail b?

$$a \not\rightarrow b$$

a) John knows he passed the test

b) John passed the test

Does a entail b?

$a \rightarrow b$

know is a factive verb