

03.09.2019

Approach towards Language Universals

Chomskyan vs Greenbergian

Chomsky

- Mentalism
- Data: 1
- Degree of abstractness: X-bar. The abstraction is very high.

General Notes on Chomsky: He talks about language innateness, having a Universal Grammar. Based on the fact that all kids learn languages the same way.

Greenberg

- Behaviourism
- Data: 300+
- Degree of abstraction: Surface structure

Universals given by Greenberg Can be word order, or placement of adjuncts, or at the morphology level.

We will be looking at his 44 Universals later.

Word Order:

- Syntactic
 - No language is 100% of one type
 - Most SOV languages are post-positional
- Morphology
- Phonetic

Types of Universals

1. Formal vs Substantives

Formal: language has rules, we have to follow them

Substantive: Have categories. Within nouns you may have subcategories.

2. Absolute vs Statistical

Eg: For statistical, all languages have a minimum of 3 vowels, max of 11.
Absolute: “All languages have verbs”

3. Implicational vs Non-implicational

We take 2 universals for this, that are dependent.

Eg: if a language is of **SOV** it is **post-positional**. NOT ABSOLUTE.

Notes in class

Typology vs Universals: Typology is the study of differences, classifying by studying structure and functional features. Universal is a pattern occurring universally across all languages

Competence and Performance: with the example of a baby, having a thought but unable to represent it in the language.

Berlin and Kay colour terms

05.09.2019

Presentation: Pick a non-Indian language that we do not know.

- Do a linguistic study, Phonology, Morphology, Syntax, Semantics,
Something special about the language.
Look at causatives, relativisation. Features. Inflection etc. Lexical level or Morphology level or Syntactic level etc etc.
- Do not have to educate on difference from Indian languages or anything
- 10 Minutes to do the presentation.
- 8-12 pages: the report/term paper.
- Bonus: Extra effort
- Apply the study of two months to the target language constantly.

Referring to Emeneau's Paper: Read **Masica**

- This paper refers to numerals and classifiers
-

Language Universals: Formal and Substantive

We have:

Formal - Substantive

Absolute - Tendencies

Implicational - Non-Implicational

09.09.2019

Manish Sir is taking the class.

Writing Systems

- First writing systems? Would you consider pictures to be writing system
- Like a language, a writing system needs to be productive
- Conveying an idea is one part of writing. There will be rules.
- Why does language and writing have to be connected?
- Brings up: speech, language, and writing. And there is evidence that speech does not necessarily translate to written language. Eg: Chinese is a good one.
- “It should associate itself with all the capabilities of the language” - but the burden of productivity lies with the language, and the writing system is tied to the language.

Saujas: writing systems have their own productivity

Summarising

- Has to be consistent, by convention
- It's not expressing anything new. It has to do with expression of what is expressed by the language.

Ujwal: what about math?

Sir: Math is sort of a language itself, so to speak. (so to speak repeated by Saujas, sarcastically). The language itself cannot be called a language, linguistically. But considering the connection with written form, it's as expressive, productive, etc: hallmarks of a language?

Saujas: Math writing has to be unambiguous.

- Purpose of writing systems is persistency, not [missed]

Persistence of Writing?

- Speech is transient: if phonemes are missed, it's gone.
- The persistence factor of writing comes from what can be done with it.
- Written communication can allow for a more nuanced expression. Expressibility increases, spontaneity is lost
- Writing is independent of the discourse situation.
- Writing allows for time delays before responding

- Writer has freedom to express veeery vague idea
- Writing is monologue-ic. Speech is (always) dialogue, with the exception of maybe plays.
- Zen and the art of motorcycle maintenance, just an aside.
- Writing reduces the load of memorization
- Writing allows for more complexity, speech allows for more nuance.
Eg: Expressing sarcasm in writing. Or appreciation.
- Writing more objective.
- Allows for higher degree of fossilization.
- Writing requires standardization

General question: Sign language

- Would sign language be a speech system/writing system?
- How to transcribe sign.

There's a lot being said about pauses, no idea how to note this

Ah yes it was about writing devices, and a segue into punctuation.

So point is: punctuation does not relate to pauses, and pauses don't necessarily relate to language too.

Looking at ideographs

- ???
- Ideographs aren't real sweaty
- How to represent new concepts in an ideographic system.
- How do we get to sound correspondence again.
- Bad pronunciations of Sayar.

12.09.2019

- Typology
- Word Order
- Morphology
- Deep structures
- Approach
- Data

- Abstraction
- Broca's
- Wernicke

Language acquisition vs language loss is that ^^

- Causative
 - Lexical: eat-feed
 - Sentence: verb-make verb
 - Morph
- In different languages

Relative Clauses

- Usually a subordinate clause

Restrictive and Non Restrictive Relative clauses

16.09.2019

30.09.2019

- Summaries will be put online so others can also read it.
- Actual dates are yet to be fixed.
- It will be in class hours

Task before new topic

IPA chart in native language, from memory

Phonological Typology + universals

Reading the Pantcheva paper: [https://moodle.iit.ac.in/pluginfile.php/73176/mod_resource/content/1/Phonological typology and universals pantcheva.pdf](https://moodle.iit.ac.in/pluginfile.php/73176/mod_resource/content/1/Phonological%20typology%20and%20universals%20pantcheva.pdf)

04.11.2019

- Language Universals
- Language Loss

Language loss in people who've lost facility due to accident, or something.

Looking at **Aphasia**. Specifically *Broca's* and *Wernicke's*

- Language Development
- In children

There's not understanding what one says but speaking fluently, and understanding but not able to respond.

In case of Aphasic patients, we observe people talking very frequently but unable to understand what's being said. Broca's patients can comprehend, not be very fluent.

- Comprehension
- Production

Basically reading the page here for a bit

Broca: Mild difficulty in understanding, but fluency damages. Wernicke: Fluent, but difficulty understanding.

Language Development and Language Loss are opposite to each other in all dimensions.

It goes from simple \rightarrow complex, and likewise the other way round.

Imperatives are simple, Humour is complex and comes last.