

1 Language

1 Communication

2 Signs – exponent and referent, reference, meaning, code

- symptoms
- icons
 - onomatopoeic words
- symbols

3 Linguistic communication

- language
- design features of human languages (as opposed to animal “languages”)
 - intentionality
 - displacement
 - arbitrariness
 - duality (double articulation)
 - patterning
 - creativity (productivity)

4 Paralanguage

Exercises*

- 1 What is the exponent, the referent and the meaning of the English word *pen*? Why can we say that the relationship between the exponent and the referent is arbitrary?
- 2 What are the counterparts of the following English onomatopoeic words in your language: *buzz*, *oink*, *meow*, *beep*. What does this show?
- 3 When a dog opens its mouth and shows its teeth in a threat to bite, the sign it uses is partly iconic, partly symptomatic. Explain.
- 4 Classify the following signs: involuntary cough, cough for getting attention, nod of head ('yes'), uh-huh ('yes'), *yes*, *bzzz* (sound of a bee), waving the hand ('Good-bye'), blushing, sweating.
- 5 Combine the following phonemes in as many ways as you can to form existing English words: /p/, /t/, /s/, /ɔ/. Point out some impossible combinations, too. What are your conclusions?
- 6 Consider the following sentences. Put a star (*) after those that you think are ungrammatical (i.e. not possible) sentences in English. State, if you can, why you think the sentence is ungrammatical.
 - a. Robin gave Mary a flower.
 - b. Robin gave a flower Mary.
 - c. Robin gave Mary it.
 - d. The captain made the crew clean the board.
 - e. Jane would like to talk to.
 - f. Is the rabbit sleeping a carrot?
 - g. Why was you late?
 - h. He quickly put the book.
 - i. He ain't got no idea.
 - j. Did at the airport you arrive in time?
- 7 You can teach your dog to *sit up*, *roll over*, *play dead*, *stay* and *jump* on command, using the italicized words as cues. Does it mean that you are teaching it language? Why or why not?
- 8 Take a look at the following statements: I learned a new word today. I learned a new sentence today. Do you think the two statements are equally probable, and if not, why not?
- 9 What do the barking of dogs, the meowing of cats, and the singing of birds have in common with human language? What are some of the basic differences?
- 10 Explain the reasons why an animal would be incapable of communicating something like *A unicorn kidnapped my brother yesterday*.

* From Varga (2010) and Fromkin, Victoria, Robert Rodman, and Nina Hyams. 2011. An Introduction to Language. 9th edition. Wadsworth, Cengage Learning.