

LIN 100
Spring 2024 Quiz 1

True or False

1. Language is innate in humans. **True**
2. Spoken language is not as old as written language. **False**
3. Displacement is the design feature that allows us to talk about things that are not real.
True
4. Productivity allows us to create a potentially infinite number of utterances. **True**
5. Language is probably 150,000-200,000 years old. **True**
6. Human children have generally acquired the majority of their language by the time they are 3-4 years old. **True**
7. Some non-human animals possess a limited amount of language properties. **True**
8. Cultural transmission is the property that specifies that language is passed down from generation to generation. **True**
9. Non-human animals often have systems of communication. **True**
10. Discreteness means that there is no logical connection between form and function. **False**

“Mini-essay”- Please write two well-formed paragraphs to answer the following question.

11. Why do linguists generally accept that language is unique to humans?

Generally, linguists take the position that language is unique to humans because of the essential features that separate human language from other animal communicative systems. Out of all animal communication systems, human language is the most complex with rules and grammatical systems that allow for the expression of differing and specific meanings. Features such as productivity make language endless through an infinite number of utterances.

Acquiring and using human language involves cognitive ability and a neural anatomy that is unique to us humans. The development of language in children generally follows a consistent pattern, led by innate linguistic functions that work in facilitating language acquisition during important stages of development. While some other animals exhibit communication systems with certain language-like properties (i.e primates or birds), none demonstrate the full range of linguistic complexity observed in human language.

12. What is language?

Language serves as the primary medium in which humans communicate and express themselves to one another. Language involves a complex system of sound, symbols, and grammatical structure that allow individuals to express ideas and convey meaning. Beyond utility, language is an important component of human cognitive development that requires the neural structure specific to humans to help develop it. How we perceive and interact with the world is influenced by language; As soon as we are born we begin to learn language, familiarizing ourselves with the sounds and grammatical rules we find around us.

Language involves various components such as phonology, morphology, syntax, semantics, and pragmatics that work simultaneously in order to create infinite and complex ideas and meanings. This is really to say, While all animals have their own systems of communication whether it be visual, auditory, or even chemical; Language is unique to humans and it adapts along with us to the societal surroundings we find ourselves in.