

Chapter 1: Introduction

Chapter Overview and Objectives

This chapter introduces students to the topics, structure, and theoretical orientation of the textbook. After completing this chapter, students should be able to

- Distinguish among the psychological system, vocal tract, and speech.
- Explain the analogy between a computer system and the linguistic system.
- Understand the relation between data and theory.

Key Terms

generative grammar	vocal tract	data
software	speech	theory
hardware	personal pronouns	categories
output	reflexive pronouns	rules
language	antecedent	

Commentary on Chapter 1

The introduction is the only chapter that does not contain exercises. As a first-day activity that previews some of the concepts students will read about in Chapter 1, you might provide them with some data and take the class through a question-and-answer session in which they analyze it (with your help).

For example, give each student a handout like the one on page 4 of this manual. Explain briefly that you're going to have them look at some "tag" questions, so-called because they consist of a statement with a question "tagged" onto it. As you read aloud each sentence in (I), ask students to mark any sentences that sound out of the ordinary with an asterisk. (Have them to this individually and quickly; the point is that they rely on their "gut reaction" about which sentences sound unremarkable and which ones don't.)

After students have worked individually to judge the sentences, write the sentences on the board or on an overhead and ask the class as a whole about their judgments. First, ask the class how many sentences they marked with an asterisk. (The overwhelming response should be "4.") Second, run through the sentences one by one and ask the class which ones they marked with an asterisk. (The overwhelming response should be sentences 3-6.)

At this point you can make several observations to the class. First, the task of judging the sentences was an easy one. Any student who is a native speaker of English will have no difficulty in deciding whether a sentence should receive a * or not. The judgment can be made instantaneously and without reference to a dictionary, grammar book, or other authority. Second, the group was unanimous (or nearly so) in its judgments, even though the class members did not consult each other. Third, the tag question construction is not one that native speakers of English have learned to produce through conscious instruction by an outside source such as a teacher (even as far back as elementary school). Instead, it is simply part of the linguistic repertoire of every native speaker of English. This simple experiment is evidence that the class members must share some unconscious knowledge about English, knowledge that allows them to judge instantaneously whether a given structure is a possible (i.e., well-formed) tag question in English.

Now on to part (II) of the handout. Having judged sentences (1-6) as either well-formed or not, the students have a body of data upon which to draw. They can now proceed to use this data—their judgments—to infer the principles that allowed them to make the judgments. Unlike the first step, this step requires conscious analysis to formulate and fine-tune each statement.

By dividing the sentences into two groups—those with * and those without—students can start to arrive at the principles that govern tag questions. While this will take some trial and error on their part (as well as reference to some terms they might not have used in a while—like “auxiliary verb” and “antecedent of a pronoun”), with your help they can eventually arrive at the following principles:

- The verb in a tag question must match the verb in the declarative (cf. 3, which uses a present-tense verb in the declarative but a past-tense verb in the tag).
- The declarative and the tag cannot both be negative (cf. 4, which contains a negative in both parts). (Although the data do not illustrate it, you might point out that a “challenge tag” construction is possible, in which both parts are positive: e.g., “You’re threatening *me*, are you?”)
- The pronoun in the tag must match the subject of the declarative, in number, person, and gender (cf. 5, in which the subject is singular but the tag pronoun is plural).
- The verb in the tag must be a copy of the first auxiliary verb in the declarative (cf. 6, in which the tag verb is a copy of the second auxiliary verb *to be*).

If students are able to arrive at all of these principles, they will have done quite a bit for the first day of class! The point to close with is they have been “doing” linguistics: trying to formulate a conscious statement of the principles that allow speakers to judge sentences as well-formed or not.

It is also worth pointing out that principles must be refined as new data is encountered—for instance, ask students how they would form a tag question for the sentence *Mary went*. Again, they will be able to formulate an immediate, uniform response (*didn't she?*)—but it violates one of the principles that accounted so well for sentences 1-6. A linguist’s work is never done....

Sample analysis: "Tag" questions

- I. Data (acceptability judgments): Mark unacceptable S's with an asterisk (*).
 1. Mary can't go, can she?
 2. Mary has gone, hasn't she?
 3. Mary can go, couldn't she?
 4. Mary can't go, can't she?
 5. Mary can't go, can they?
 6. Mary hasn't been going, is she?
- II. Theory: Principles that predict acceptability judgments. (What principles govern tag questions in English?)

Chapter 2: Pragmatics

Chapter Overview and Objectives

This chapter delineates concepts within pragmatics, specifically implicature and speech acts.

After completing this chapter, students should be able to

- Analyze the implicature raised by an interchange.
- Identify the conversational maxim that raises a particular implicature.
- Classify an illocutionary act into one Searle's six types.
- Identify felicity conditions (or their violations) on various types of speech acts.
- Classify a speech act according to the following variables: explicit vs. nonexplicit, direct vs. indirect, expressed vs. implied, and literal vs. nonliteral.
- Explain the relationship between syntactic form and illocutionary force, especially for indirect speech acts.
- Explain how conversational implicature enables speakers to interpret implied locutionary acts.

Key Terms and Concepts

implicature	representative	performative verb
maxim of quantity	directive	direct/indirect illocutionary
maxim of quality	question	act
maxim of relation	commissive	expressed/implied
maxim of manner	expressive	locutionary act
speech act	declaration	precondition
locutionary act	felicity condition	literal/nonliteral
illocutionary act	explicit/nonexplicit	locutionary act
illocutionary force	illocutionary act	

Commentary on Chapter 2

As presented in this chapter, pragmatics is concerned with two basic questions: how speakers say things without really saying them, and how context affects interpretation. As a way of getting students to think about these questions, you might start by asking them to think of some things they might say in the following situation: You go to a friend's house in the dead of winter and find that it's uncomfortably cold. Use the board or overhead to record about 5-10 responses that students come up with, such as the following:

1. "It's cold in here."
2. "Turn up the heat."
3. "I need a sweater."
4. "What are you, a polar bear?"
5. "Is there a window open somewhere?"
6. "I'm freezing."
7. "Can you close that window?"
8. "Close that window!"
9. "Did you forget to pay your heating bill?"

One point to make is that all of these sentences are really intended to get the friend to either turn up the heat or close the window. This leads to the obvious question of why the