Announcements:


Today:

• Some social theory
• Theories of the relation between language and gender
• The linguistic system as a resource for social construction
  • Vowels, consonants and stuff like that
Structure and Agency

- **Agency**: The individual’s capacity to act independently and to choose freely.

- **Structure**: A system, larger than the sum of its parts, that organizes human activity.

- **The Issue**: To what extent does structure constrain or determine individual agency?
Structuralism

• Goal of Sociology - to explain internal cohesion that allows societies to be stable.

• Society as a bounded relational construct (much like language)
  • Its parts (social institutions) work together, constituting social equilibrium.
  • Focus on institutions
    • Family, religion, media, schools, government ...

• Individuals as temporary inhabitants of enduring roles
  • The individual is significant not in and of themself but in terms of place in the system.
  • Exceptions as noise.

“Un système où tout se tient”  Ferdinand de Saussure
Social Constructionism

• “Objective” knowledge does not emerge from natural forces, but is derived from, and maintained in, social interaction.

• People interact with the belief that their perceptions of reality are related. Acting on this understanding reinforces a sense of common knowledge, yielding a belief that their understandings are part of an objective reality.

• Over generations, those who have not been involved in the original process of negotiation view these understandings as common sense.

Structure creates the basic conditions under which people live. People in turn jointly create ways of dealing with those conditions. Dominant ways of dealing accumulate to feed back into, and potentially to change, structure.

Social agents *actively* determine, on the basis of these socially and historically constituted categories of perception and appreciation, the situation that determines them.

**The Habitus**

Structure creates the basic conventions by which people express themselves.
People in turn jointly adapt those conventions to their needs.
Dominant ways of adapting the conventions accumulate to feed back into, and potentially to change, the conventions.
“levels” of Linguistic structure

• Phonetics
• Phonology
• Morphology
• Syntax
• Pragmatics
• Semantics
• Discourse
- Phonetics
- Phonology
- Morphology
- Syntax
- Pragmatics
- Semantics
- Discourse

**THE INTERNATIONAL PHONETIC ALPHABET (revised to 2005)**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>CONSONANTS (PULMONIC)</th>
<th>2005 IPA</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>Bilabial</strong></td>
<td><strong>Labiodental</strong></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Plosive</td>
<td>p</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Nasal</td>
<td>m</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Trill</td>
<td>B</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Tap or Flap</td>
<td>v</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Fricative</td>
<td>φ</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Lateral fricative</td>
<td>ɬ</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Approximant</td>
<td>u</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Lateral approximant</td>
<td>l</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Where symbols appear in pairs, the one to the right represents a voiced consonant. Shaded areas denote articulations judged impossible.
- Phonetics
- Phonology
- Morphology
- Syntax
- Pragmatics
- Semantics
- Discourse

Where symbols appear in pairs, the one to the right represents a rounded vowel.
- Phonetics
- Phonology
- Morphology
- Syntax
- Pragmatics
- Semantics
- Discourse

Where symbols appear in pairs, the one to the right represents a rounded vowel.
Phonetics
Phonology
**Morphology**
Syntax
Pragmatics
Semantics
Discourse

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Turkish</th>
<th>English</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>dif</td>
<td>'tooth'</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>difler</td>
<td>'teeth'</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>difim</td>
<td>‘my tooth’</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>diflerim</td>
<td>‘my teeth’</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>el</td>
<td>'hand'</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>eller</td>
<td>'hands'</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>ev</td>
<td>'house'</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>evler</td>
<td>'houses'</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>evim</td>
<td>‘my house’</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>?</td>
<td>‘my houses’</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
German (and English)

• Phonetics       Wenn er aber auf der Strasse
• Phonology       der in Sammt und Seide gehüllten jetzt sehr ungeniert
• Morphology      nach der neusten Mode gekleideten
• Syntax          Regierungsräthin begegnet,
• Pragmatics      But when he, upon the street,
• Semantics       the in-satin-and-silk-covered-now-very-unconstrained-
• Discourse       after-the-newest-fashioned-dressed
government counselor's wife met,
My car needs washed

We ain't never really had no tornadoes in this area here that I don't remember.

Here's you a piece of pizza.

Yale Grammatical Diversity Project

https://ygdp.yale.edu/phenomena
Reading Inoue

- Language and gender in the service of national projects
- How new social categories emerge
- Language as heard – the auditory gaze