

Tutorial Questions

a. In each of the pairs below, one statement is typical of human language (HL) while the other is more characteristic of animal communication (AC). Mark them HL and AC respectively.

- i. The system produces an unlimited number of novel utterances.
- ii. There is a closed repertory of distinctive utterances.
- iii. The topic of communication is present in the immediate environment of the utterance.
- iv. The system is acquired by learning.
- v. The system is transmitted through genetic inheritance.
- vi. The connection between signal and its meaning is arbitrary and conventional.
- vii. The connection between signal and its meaning is iconic and natural.

b. Wolves express subtle emotions by different positions of ears, lips and tail. There are 11 postures of the tail expressing things like self-confidence, lack of tension, depression, defensiveness, active submission etc. This is a complex system! Suppose there were a thousand different emotion wolves could express in this way. Do they have language similar to humans? If not, why not?

b. While the outward expression of emotions **can certainly communicate information about our mental states**, these expressions lack the full complexity of a fully formed human language.

- emotion is something we use to communicate key experiences with others. We do this *through many non-linguistic means*, including facial expression, touch, and tone (and of course music!). But forcing emotion to fit into a linear, time-sequenced, grammatical linguistic format **betrays the quality of the emotional experience itself**

-Emotions are *very broad* and one can map to many different experiences, and don't come close to the well-defined, discrete units (phonemes, morphemes, phrases, etc...) that make up language.-

Charles Hockett's Design Features

In 1960, the linguistic anthropologist *Charles Francis Hockett* conducted a pioneering featural study of language. In the study, he listed 13 design features that he deemed to be **universal across the world's languages**. More importantly, these features *distinguished human language from animal communication*.

1. Arbitrariness
 2. Creativity/ Productivity
 3. Cultural Transmission
 4. Discreteness
 5. Displacement
- Prevarication

