The Linguistic Approach

Assignment #1: Send an email to tpayne@uoregon.edu with the following information (due tomorrow):
- Your name
- Languages you speak
  - Mother tongue
  - Others which you: can speak fluently, can speak a little, can read/write, have studied, etc.
- Previous linguistics courses
- Plans for the future
- What do you expect to get out of this class?

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- What comes to mind when you think of “grammar”?

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- Grammar (with a capital “G”) as the object of linguistic investigation:

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- Grammar is a bridge between mental states of individuals and the social reality of their community.

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- Fact or Fiction? Casual everyday speech is grammatically poorer than careful, formal speech.
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• Descriptive rather than prescriptive
  Like, OH MY GOSH!
  Like - TOTALLY.
  Encino is like SO COOL.
  There's like the Galleria.
  And like all these like really great shoe stores.
  I love going into like clothes stores 'n' stuff.
  I like buy the neatest mini-skirts 'n' stuff.
  It's like SO COOL cuz like everybody's like
  Super-super nice...
  It's like WAY COOL ...

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• Fact or Fiction? Non-standard varieties
  of English are grammatically deficient,
  sloppy, or illogical.

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• Fact: Double negation is not “illogical” at all:
  First, the only interpretation of I didn't do
  nothing wrong is negative, not affirmative.
  No one is confused by this construction.
  Second, many other “standard” languages
  use two negative morphemes (e.g.,
  French, Russian, Hausa . . .).

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• Like-insertion
  – Encino is like so COOL.
  – * Encino like is so COOL.
  – * Encino is so COOL like.
  – * Like Encino is so COOL.
  • This is a totally regular and consistent
    pattern.

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• Two non-standard constructions:
  a. Double negation.
     I didn't do nothing wrong.
     You ain't going to no heaven.
  b. Omission of “be”.
     He doing something.
     She in the hospital.

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• Fact: be omission occurs in certain “non-
  standard” varieties exactly where
  contraction is allowed in “standard”
  English:
  He doing something.
  He’s doing something.
  Yes he is.
  *Yes he.
  *Yes he’s.
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- **Who is it?** standard and non-standard
- *Who it?*
- *Who’s it?*
- I know who you are.
- I know who you be.
- *I know who you’re.
- *I know who you.

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- *be* omission, like double negation and *like* insertion follows regular grammatical patterns.
- These are the same kinds of patterns with about the same degree of complexity as are found in the “standard” language.
- They are useful patterns, because they allow people to communicate.

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- **Summary**
  - All languages and language varieties are approximately equal in grammatical complexity.
  - If you are a native speaker of a language, regardless of the variety, you have a perfect internalized, unconscious grammar of that language.
  - Linguists are interested in explaining what kinds of rules people unconsciously follow, regardless of the social status of their speech.

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- **Methods**
  - data collection
  - data analysis
  - hypothesis generation
  - hypothesis testing and revision
  - principled explanation

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- **Theory of symbolic systems**
  The form-function composite:
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- Terms associated with the two main parts of the form-function composite:

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- How does the mind actually work?

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Characteristics of Heart and Head Knowledge

Heart knowledge  Head knowledge

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- The process of becoming “fluent” in an L2 is the process of moving from head knowledge to heart knowledge of the form-function composites of the L2.

Components of Grammar

- Grammar is traditionally divided into two main components:
  - Morphology
  - Syntax

Concepts in Morphology

- A morpheme is an idealized mental construct. It represents the smallest piece of form that expresses meaning in a language, e.g. {cat}, {-s}, {-ed}, {-leftward stress shift}.
- An allomorph is a variant, or alternate pronunciation of a morpheme, e.g. {-s}, {-z} and {-iz} are all allomorphs of the plural {-s} in English.
- A bound morpheme is a morpheme that cannot occur by itself - it must be attached to at least one other morpheme, e.g. the {un-} in “unkind,” the {-ly} in “happily,” or the {huckle} in “huckleberry.”