

Linguistics D: Class 3 The criteria of language description

1 Research project

Q.1 Think about what is enough data to support the answer to your research question.

2 Theoretical aspect: The criteria of language description

Q.2 Try to replace the order of words, abbreviate words, or omit words in your language and see if the sentence is understandable.

Q.3 Discuss whether the language description criteria can be simply set to “understandable.”

Q.4 Discuss what is important other than “understand” as the standard of language description.

3 Mathematical aspect: Zip’s Law

Q.5 Tokenize sentences, count the frequency of words, and arrange them in order.

Q.6 Discuss the relationship between word frequency and ranking.

Q.7 The relationship between word frequency and rank is sometimes called “long tail.” Discuss what other phenomena this relationship is seen in.

Q.8 Discuss what you have to be careful about when analyzing a language mathematically because of this phenomenon.

4 Topic of the day: Metaphor

Q.9 “I can see the head of the car” or “Where is the tail of this line?” Discuss if you can say the sentences above in your language or English.

Q.10 Discuss how commonly “metaphors” are used in your language and English.

Q.11 Discuss if there is a language without metaphors.

Q.12 If a language does not have a metaphor function, discuss what the language will be.

5 Sentence structure of Japanese: Adjectives

Q.13 There are two types of Japanese adjectives: one is called an adjective and the other is called an adjective noun. Discuss each feature.

Q.14 Adjectival nouns are called *keiyō dōshi* (adjectival verbs) in Japanese and are not called with *meishi*, nouns. Discuss why it is named such as adjectival verbs.

Q.15 Discuss if there is an issue when we regard this type of adjectival noun as an adjective which conjugates differently from other adjectives.

6 Further exercises

Q.16 Find some articles relating to today's questions/topics in textbooks your instructor introduced, and describe the name of the book, the number of pages, the title of the article, and your opinion.