

Introduction to Linguistics – Semester 2

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I can meet via Skype or Zoom Thursdays and Fridays.

Aim of course

An overview of Linguistics for students in philology

Evaluation

1 mini test during the semester

1 end of semester test

1 homework task

Overview

1. Intro – Revision and Evolution of Language
2. Syntax: Formal
3. Syntax: Functional
4. Semantics: Lexical relations
5. Semantics: Categorisation
6. Semantics: Metaphor
7. Pragmatics: Implicature, deixis
8. Pragmatics: Communication, Speech acts
9. Discourse / CDA
10. Variation / Sociolinguistics
11. History of English / Typology
12. End of semester Test

Revision - Discussion

Semiotics: Form – Meaning Pairs

Phonemes, Morphemes, Lexemes

Allophone, Allomorph, Lemma

Morphology: Parts of Speech

Form – Meaning / Function

Derivation / Inflection

Origins of Language

Why did language evolve?

What evolutionary purpose does it serve?

Origins of Language

We do not know!

We don't even know when Homo Sapiens started speaking

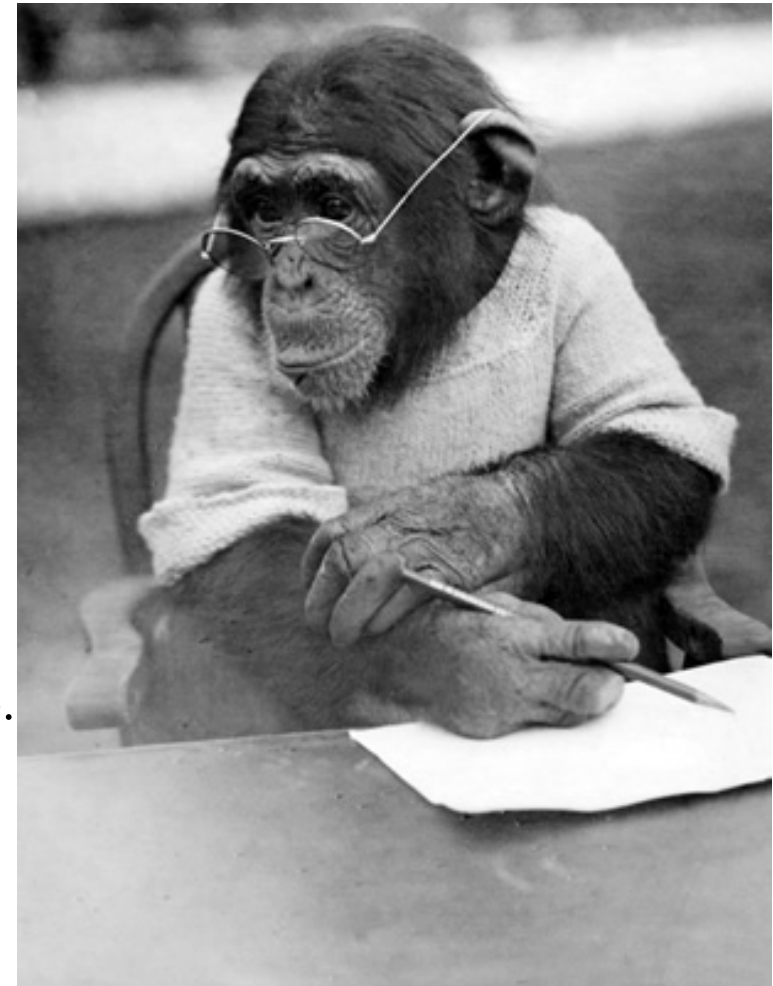
Anatomically – 200,000 years ago ?

Culturally – 75,000 years ago ?

So, any where between 200,000 years and 75,000 years ago.

It was probably about 100,000 years ago

But never believe anyone who tells you otherwise,
we really don't know and probably never will



Why not just complex monkey sounds?

Primates lie! All the time! Primate communication is inherently selfish

In fact, primates tend to ignore much communication,
because it's often produced to trick them

This limits the development of language! Words are cheap!

Also, they do quite well with warning signals and food signals and tribal signals

Why go to all the fuss to develop and maintain language?

What evolutionary reason would cause us to develop?

this nightmarishly complex system of communication?



Origins of Language – Some of the theories

There are many theories, some serious contenders include;

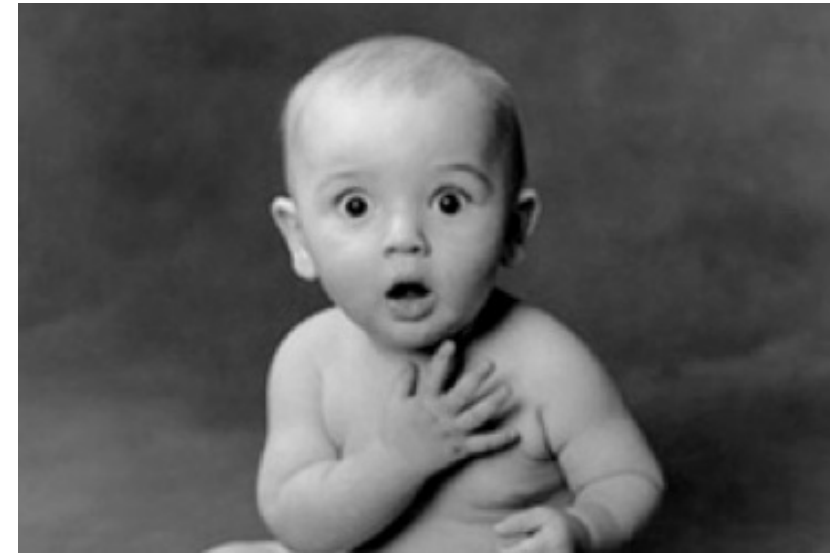
Survival on the Savannah

Gossiping and grooming (*commérage et toiletage*)

Putting the baby down

Ritual and rite

In your reading for next week, you will find others



Innateness

Is language innate?

If so, is it a dedicated faculty or is it a lucky combination of cognitive abilities

! Linguists have trained a chimpanzee to communicate (using sign language) to the level of a 2-3 year old child.

Critical Age

! Children who are not taught to speak as a child, never learn to speak properly, ever...

There are many mysteries about language that we still have not yet solved

That is the science of linguistics

L1 acquisition in Questions

Grammaticality – your feeling for what is possible and not possible in a language

Where does that come from?

How does a child learn the “rules” of language?

Why is it easier for a child to learn a language than an adult?

What does it mean to be a “native speaker”?

Can an adult learn a language and be considered a native speaker?

Teaching Chimps to speak

Two chimps, Moja, Washoe and Dar have been taught to speak

Here are examples of conversations with them (they can only sign, not speak), reported by linguistics

After her nap, Washoe signed OUT.

I was hoping for Washoe to potty herself and did not comply.

Then Washoe took my hands and put them together to make OUT and then signed OUT with her own hands to show me how.

Greg (linguist) was hooting and making other sounds, to prevent Dar from falling asleep.

Dar put his fist to Greg's lips and made kissing sounds.

Greg asked WHAT WANT? and Dar signed QUIET, placing the sign on Greg's lips.

Moja signed DOG on Ron (linguist) and me (linguist) and looked at our faces, waiting for us to "woof."

After several rounds I made a "meeow" instead.

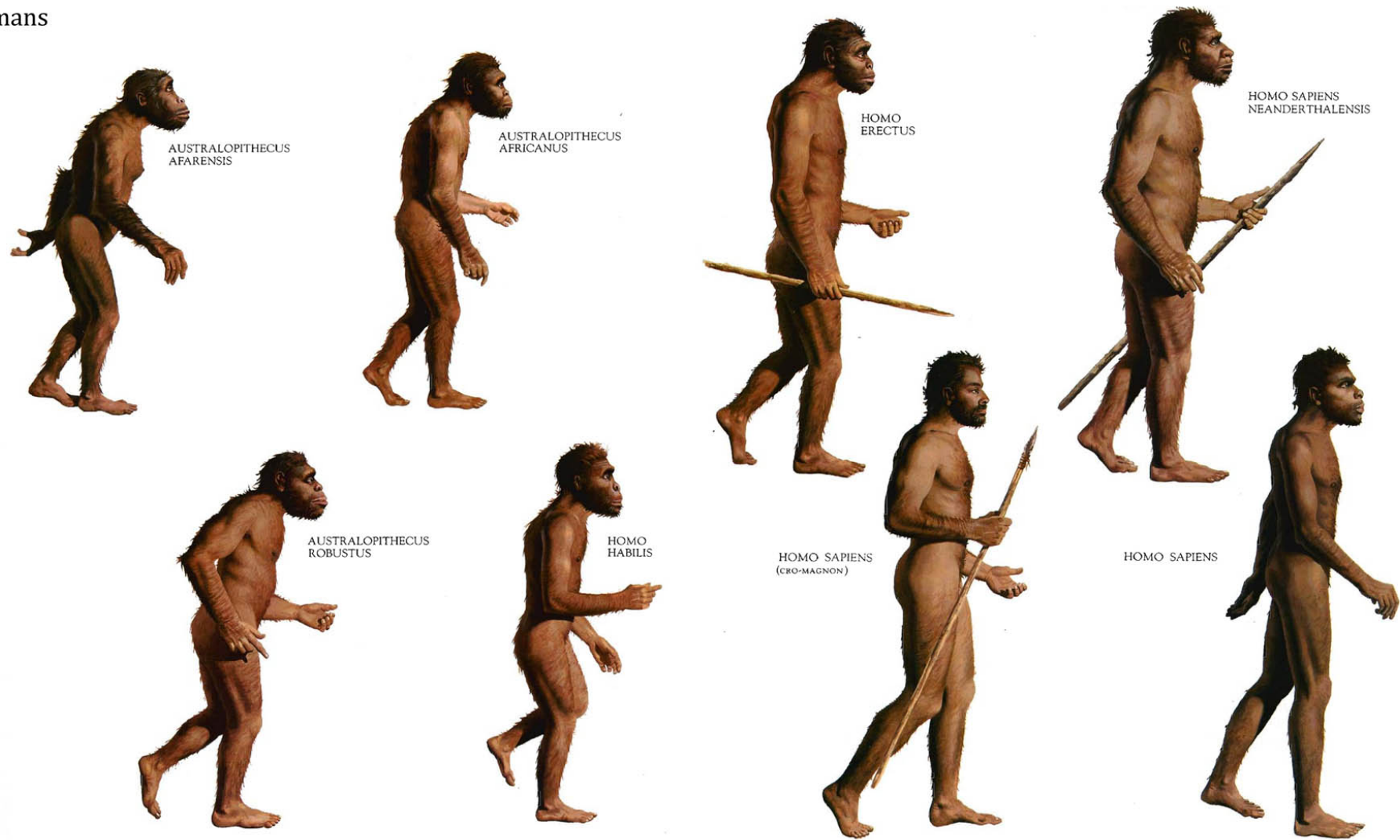
Moja signed DOG again,

I repeated "meeow" again, and Moja slapped my leg harder. This went on.

Finally I woofed and Moja leapt on me and hugged me.

Human – a language

Humans

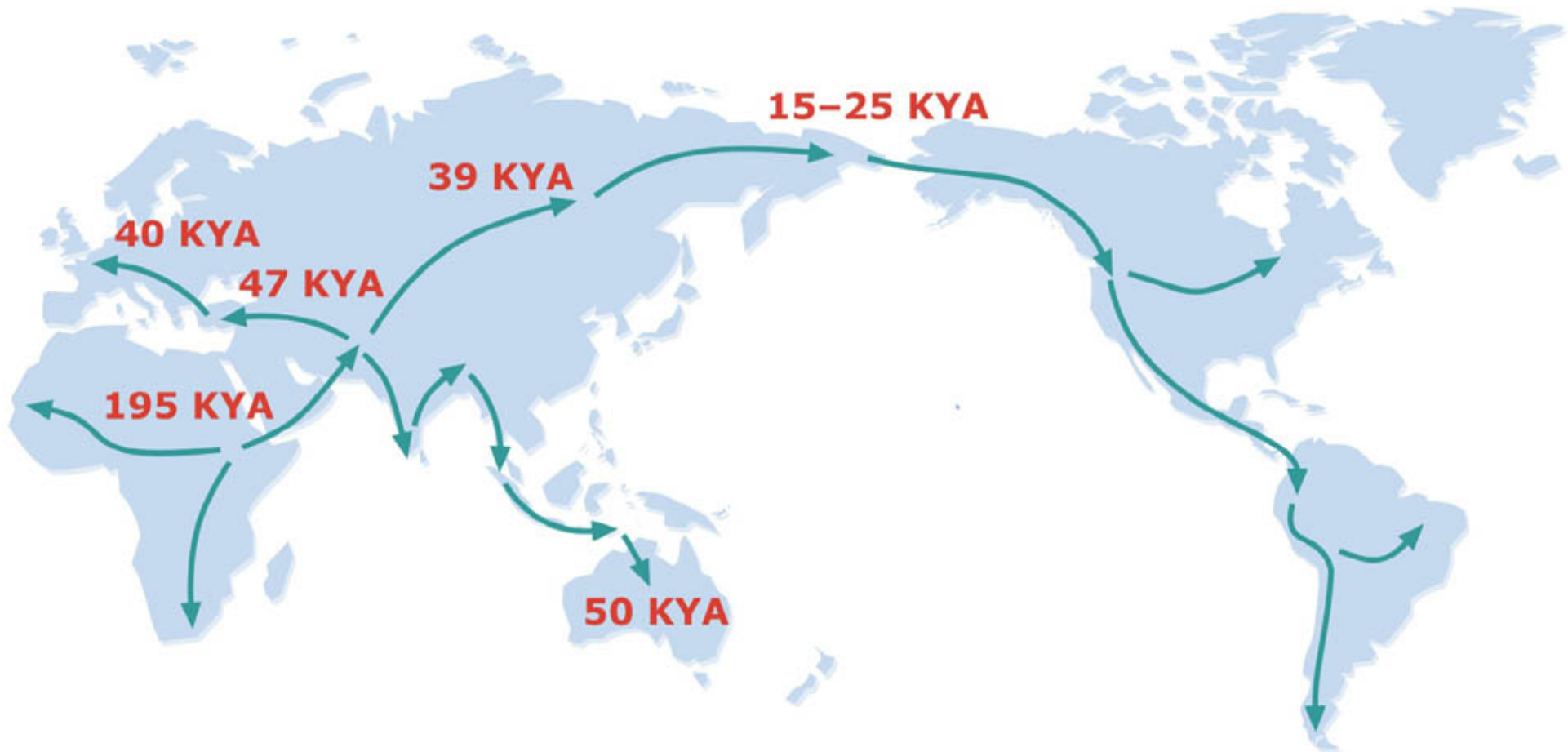


Human – a language

There was once a human language.... but that was a long time ago

We believe it started in east Africa... but we don't know

Why is it likely that we (humans) already had language when we left Africa?



For next week...

There is reading on line.

Please read it