Recursion assignment

http://www-rohan.sdsu.edu/~gawron/fundamentals

Jean Mark Gawron
San Diego State University, Department of Linguistics

2012-01-25 Ling 525
1. Readings
Outline

1 Readings

2 How to read
Outline

1. Readings
2. How to read
3. What to write
1. Readings

2. How to read

3. What to write
What to read

1. Kuhl and Miller (1975)
2. Hauser et al. (2002)
3. Pinker and Jackendoff (2005)
4. Fitch et al. (2005)
5. Everett (2005): “Lack of embedding” section
Outline

1. Readings
2. How to read
3. What to write
Reading goals

1. Read the readings, focusing on the question of **recursion**.

2. For each reading, ask yourself: *What does this paper say about the role of recursion in human language?*

3. The Chomsky, Hauser, Fitch papers and the Jackendoff, Pinker papers have opposing positions about the human language faculty. Make sure you understand what those positions are. Make sure you understand what role recent work on animal communication plays for Chomsky, Hauser, and Fitch.

4. Make sure you understand what role recursion plays in the Chomsky, Hauser view. Make sure you understand the role of recursion on the Jackendoff, Pinker view and whether it differs.
Outline

1. Readings
2. How to read
3. What to write
1. Begin by explaining the position of Fitch et al. (2005) on the human language faculty. [2 pages, More on the next slide]

2. Explain how the positions of the Chomsky, Hauser, Fitch (CHF) papers and the Jackendoff, Pinker (JP) papers on the human language faculty differ. [1 page]

3. Explain why CHF think recursion is important. Do Jackendoff and Pinker disagree with CHF about recursion? [no more than 1/2 page]

4. Explain what recursion is in language. Give some linguistic examples. [no more than 1/2 page]

5. Explain how Dan Everett’s work (the section on Embedding) relates to CHF’s work.

6. Conclude by explaining your own view on recursion. Does it differ from the CHF view? What do you think the significance of Everett’s work is?
Here are some things to cover in discussing Fitch et al. (2005):

- What is meant by FLB and FLN? What are the subcomponents of FLB?

- What is the general position of CHF on whether components of the faculty of language evolved specifically for language? Do they have the same position on every component of the faculty of language? Do they have the same position on FLB and FLN?

- What is the significance of Kuhl and Miller (1975) and Kluender et al. (1987) in their discussion (note: these are items 17 and 19 in their References)? How do they relate to their general view of FLB?

- Explain the significance of the work of two of the authors (F & H) on Tamarins (this is reference 117). You do not have to read the paper. Read the summary of the results and explain how these results support CHF’s view of FLN.
Here is how to tell that you are doing a bad job explaining what a paper is about:

- Your “explanation” exactly follows the structure of the paper. You tell us what they say in Section 1, then Section 2, then Section 3.
- You tell us **everything** they say, you’re not selective.
- You don’t tell us the **point** of what they’re saying.


Japanese quail can learn phonetic categories.  

Speech perception by the chinchilla: Voiced-voiceless distinction in alveolar plosive consonants.  

The faculty of language: what’s special about it?  
*Cognition* 95(2):201 – 236.