Name: \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_

NetID: \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_

Discussion Section (*make sure to include!*): \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_

Linguistics 1010

Make-Up Assignment

Week 13

**Part I: Sign Languages**

1. List four necessary properties that a linguistic system should have to be considered a human language.
2. For each property that you listed in question 1, give examples from ASL and compare them with English to prove that ASL is a full human language.

|  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- |
| Property  | English  | ASL |
| 1. Phonology |  |  |
| 2.  |  |  |
| 3. |  |  |
| 4. |  |  |

1. You may remember from our course that, in phonology, minimal pairs are pairs of words that differ only in one particular element. Here’s an English example:

Minimal Pair: contrastive feature:

[fæn] / [væn] voicing of the labiodental fricative (voiceless in ***f****an* vs voiced in ***v****an*)

List 4 minimal pairs of signs in ASL and indicate what the contrastive feature is:

|  |  |
| --- | --- |
| Minimal pair | Contrastive feature |
|  |  |
|  |  |
|  |  |
|  |  |

1. For each of the locations below, indicate whether it is (yes) or is not (no) a distinctive **location** feature in ASL:

a. trunk yes / no f. weak hand yes / no

b. knee yes / no g. tree yes / no

c. ankle yes / no h. mid face yes / no

d. neck yes / no i forearm yes / no

e. shin yes / no j. back wrist yes / no

1. Indicate if the given statements are **True** or **False**. If they are **false**, explain why.

a) There is only one sign language that all deaf people around the world use.

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b) Most deaf children are born to deaf parents.

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c) The output of cochlear implants is as accurate as the output of biological cochleas.

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d) Sign languages are not just signed version of spoken languages, therefore ASL and English may have different syntax.

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e) If a deaf child is going to have a cochlear implant in a few years, it is really not necessary to provide them with the sign language input.

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**Part II: Endangered Languages, Language Death, and Language Genesis**

6. What is the approximate population of the world today?

7. How many languages are spoken in the world today according to the colloquial definition of language?

8. What percentage of the world population speaks one of ‘the big 9’ languages?

9. How many languages are necessary to cover 90% of the world’s population?

11. When does a language die?

12. How many languages die per month according the estimations made by linguists?

13. Name two things that we lose when a language dies:

14. Please list two reasons that parents might stop teaching their native language to their children:

15. Based on the facts connected with the genesis of Nicaraguan Sign Language, explain why the development of this language can serve as another great argument for **innate knowledge** and **critical period**.

**Innate knowledge of language:**

**Critical period:**