ANTHROPOLOGY · STUDY GUIDE

Exam 2 Study Guide

This guide covers chapters 3 and 4. First you will take apart the culture concept: what it is, how each person absorbs it, how to study other cultures without sneering or losing your footing, how symbols carry meaning and why no culture holds still. Then you will turn to language: what makes it human, how it is built, whether it shapes thought, how much is said without words and why languages change and die. Read the “what to know” paragraphs, copy the tables by hand, then try each worked case with the steps covered. Finish each chapter with its ten self-test items, then use the cram sheet.

WHAT THIS GUIDE COVERS

- Chapter 3 · Tylor’s definition, learned, shared, symbolic and integrated, enculturation and its agents, rites of passage, ethnocentrism, unilineal evolution and relativism, emic and etic, symbols, values, folkways, mores, worldview and the mechanisms of change.
- Chapter 4 · linguistic anthropology, Hockett’s design features, phonemes and morphemes, Universal Grammar, Sapir-Whorf and its evidence, kinesics, proxemics and paralanguage, dialects, registers, code-switching, diglossia, pidgins, creoles and language shift.

CHAPTER 3

Culture

Read it in full: **Chapter 3 in the textbook**. Practice it in the lab: **Enculturation** and **Four Features of Culture**.

What to know

In everyday speech “culture” means opera and fine wine. Anthropologists mean the whole learned way of life of a group. Edward B. Tylor opened *Primitive Culture* (1871) by calling culture “that complex whole” of knowledge, belief, art, morals, law, custom and habits “acquired by man as a member of society.” Some separate “big-C Culture” (the arts) from “small-c culture” (the whole pattern of living); the book always means the second. Everyone has culture.

Four features turn up in nearly every definition. Culture is **learned**, never inherited in the genes: a spider spins its web without a lesson, but no human is born knowing how to greet an elder. It is **shared**, which makes social life predictable, though shared never means uniform; subcultures and individual variation always exist. It is **symbolic**, working through meanings assigned by agreement. It is **integrated**: change one part and the rest moves. When the Skolt Sámi of northern Finland adopted the snowmobile in the 1960s, as Pertti Pelto tracked, herding, wealth, the cash economy and status all shifted.

Societies can be compared by overall shape. Elman Service's *Primitive Social Organization* (1962) sorts them into bands, tribes, chiefdoms and states; a parallel scheme sorts them by subsistence (foraging, horticulture, pastoralism, agriculture, industrialism). The two track each other loosely: foragers tend to live in bands, states rest on intensive agriculture. No society is a pure type. Culture is not race and not biology: an adopted infant acquires the culture of the home that raises it, and Boas showed that traits treated as fixed racial markers shifted with environment.

Enculturation is the lifelong process of absorbing one's culture, mostly by watching and imitating, not by formal lessons. Isolated children show that culture must be transmitted; it is not automatic. Mead's *Coming of Age in Samoa* (1928) argued that adolescent turbulence takes its shape from culture. Her specific conclusions were later contested, but the central claim, that development is molded by culture, reshaped thinking about childhood.

Agents of enculturation include the family (first and deepest), peers, schooling, religion and media. Teaching may be **explicit** ("say thank you") or, far more often, **implicit**: how close to stand, when to look away, whose turn it is to speak. Which relatives teach is itself cultural; in patrilineal or matrilineal societies, a particular set of kin may do most of the raising.

Arnold van Gennep's *Les rites de passage* (1909) found three phases in ceremonies of transition: **separation** from the old status, a **liminal** phase (from Latin *limen*, threshold) of being neither one thing nor the other, and **incorporation** into a new, recognized status. Victor Turner showed that in liminality ordinary rules and ranks are suspended and initiates often feel **communitas**, an intense leveling bond. Examples: a Maasai boy secluded after circumcision and returned as a junior warrior, basic training, a graduation.

William Graham Sumner coined **ethnocentrism** in *Folkways* (1906): judging other cultures by one's own standards, with one's own group as the natural center. It is nearly universal because enculturation makes our customs feel correct. Early anthropology was itself ethnocentric: Lewis Henry Morgan's *Ancient Society* (1877) ranked every people from "savagery" through "barbarism" to "civilization," and Frazer built a staircase from magic to religion to science. This **unilineal evolutionism** was ethnocentrism dressed as science.

Franz Boas countered with **historical particularism** (each culture is the product of its own history) and **cultural relativism** (understand a practice in its own context before judging it). Relativism as anthropologists use it is **methodological**, not a naive moral relativism that forbids all evaluation. The tension between relativism and universal human rights is real, and honest scholars sit with it. Pike coined **emic** and **etic**; Marvin Harris put them to wide use.

Leslie White argued that the **symbol** is the basic unit of culture. A symbol stands for something by agreement: the link is **arbitrary** (nothing dog-like in the word "dog") and **conventional** (it works because a community shares it). Language is the master symbol system. White is worn at a Western wedding but is the color of mourning in much of East and South Asia. The **Kula ring** (Malinowski, 1922) moves shell armbands (*mwali*) one way and necklaces (*soulava*) the other around the Massim islands; the valuables are useless as tools and never kept for good, so their worth is purely symbolic. The Kula also illustrates **reciprocity**, contrasted with redistribution and market exchange.

Values are shared ideas of what is good. **Norms** are rules that flow from them. Sumner split norms into **folkways** (etiquette; mild disapproval, like chewing with your mouth open) and **mores** (moral weight; serious sanction, like the incest taboo). Over all of these sits a **worldview**, a culture's picture of how reality is ordered. Geertz read culture as "webs of significance" through thick description, a twitch, a wink or a parody of a wink. Harris's cultural materialism answered that culture must also be explained by etic factors such as ecology and technology.

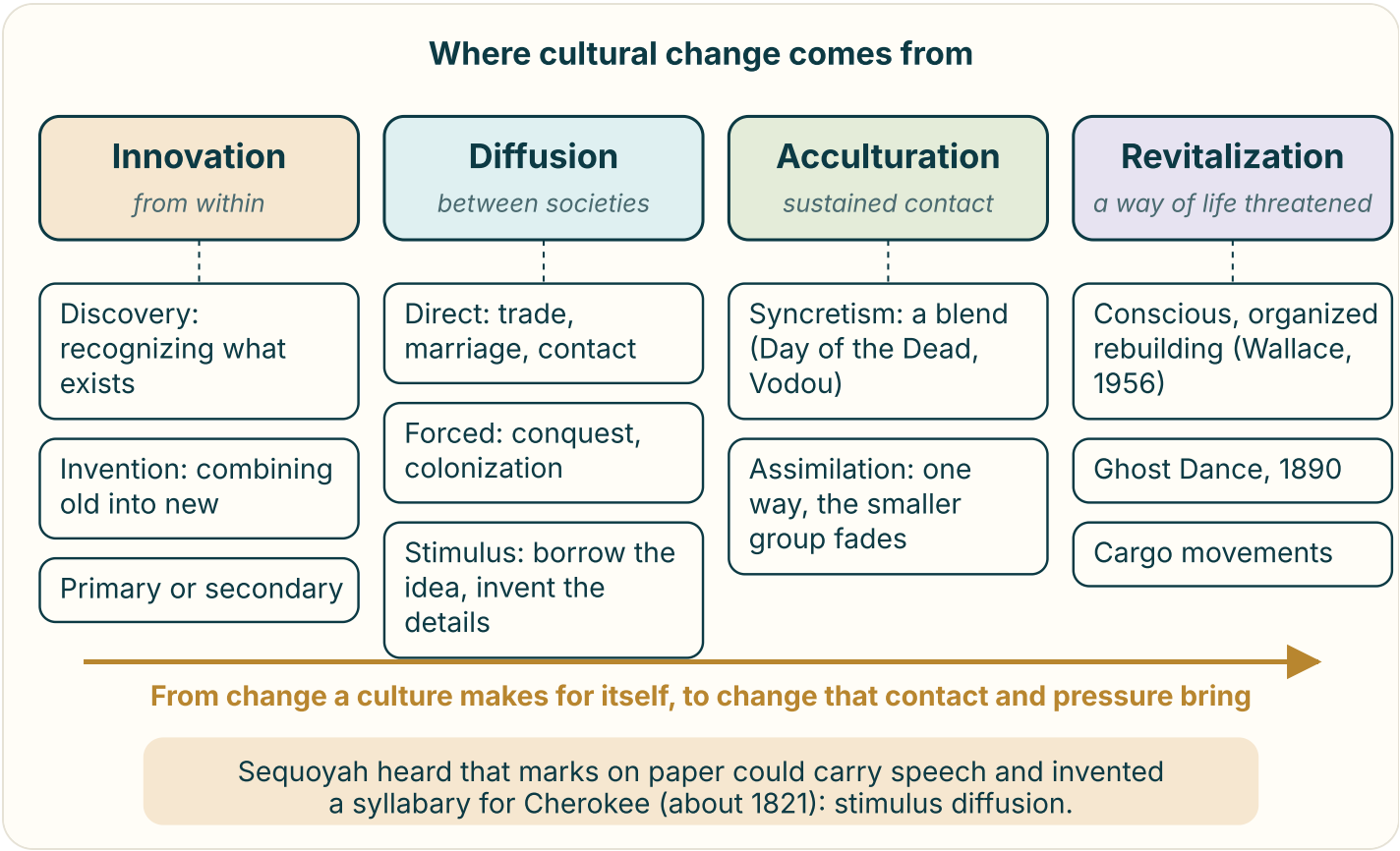
All change begins as **innovation**: a **discovery** recognizes what already exists, an **invention** combines existing knowledge into something new, and innovations may be primary or secondary. Most content arrives by **diffusion**: direct (trade, marriage, contact), forced (conquest, colonization) or stimulus (borrow the idea, invent the details, as Sequoyah did with his Cherokee

syllabary, completed around 1821). Ralph Linton's "One Hundred Per-Cent American" (1937) shows how little of anyone's morning is homegrown.

Acculturation is change from sustained firsthand contact. It may produce **syncretism** (Mexico's Day of the Dead; Haitian Vodou) or one-way **assimilation**, often under pressure. Anthony F. C. Wallace (1956) defined the **revitalization movement**, a conscious, organized effort to build a more satisfying culture: the Ghost Dance of 1890, taught by the Northern Paiute prophet Wovoka, ended in the massacre at Wounded Knee; Melanesian "cargo cults" are now often called cargo movements. Globalization drives both homogenization and hybridization, or "glocalization." There is no pure, static culture.

LOCK THESE IN

- Culture: learned, shared, symbolic, integrated. Tylor's "complex whole" (1871) means small-c culture.
- Integration: the Sámi snowmobile reshaped herding, wealth and status (Pelto).
- Enculturation is lifelong and mostly implicit; family is the first and deepest agent.
- Rite of passage: separation, liminality, incorporation (van Gennep 1909); communitas (Turner).
- Ethnocentrism: Sumner, 1906. Unilineal evolution: Morgan's *Ancient Society* (1877).
- Relativism (Boas) is a method, not blanket approval. Emic and etic are its tools.
- Symbols are arbitrary and conventional (White). Folkways get mild sanction; mores get serious sanction.
- Change: innovation, diffusion (direct, forced, stimulus), acculturation (syncretism, assimilation), revitalization (Wallace).



Where change comes from. Innovation starts inside a culture; diffusion, acculturation and revitalization follow from contact, and the pressure rises from left to right. Most of any culture's content arrives by diffusion.

Key terms and comparisons

Term	Meaning	Example
Learned	Acquired through experience, not genes	A child speaks whatever language surrounds it
Shared	Patterns held in common, never uniform	Strangers cooperate at a checkout line
Symbolic	Meaning assigned by agreement	A red light means stop; a ring means married
Integrated	Change in one part ripples through the rest	The Sámi snowmobile
Subculture	A group within a society with its own values and practices	Variation inside any culture
Value	A shared idea of what is good	“Elders deserve deference”
Folkway	Everyday norm of etiquette; mild sanction	Facing forward in an elevator
More	Morally weighted norm; serious sanction	The incest taboo; bans on theft and murder
Worldview	The overarching picture of how reality is ordered	Nature as resource or as web

Stances toward other cultures

Concept	Stance	Guiding question
Ethnocentrism	Judge others by my standards	“Why don’t they do it the right (my) way?”
Unilineal evolutionism	One ladder, savagery to civilization	Morgan (1877); Frazer, magic to religion to science
Historical particularism	Each culture is the product of its own history	Boas
Methodological relativism	Understand in context before judging	“What does this mean and do for them?”
Naive moral relativism	Forbids any evaluation	Not what anthropologists use
Emic / etic	Insider categories / analyst’s comparative terms	Pike coined; Harris spread them

Mechanisms of change

Mechanism	Source	Example
Discovery	Recognizing something that already existed	A plant’s medicinal use
Invention	Combining existing knowledge into something new	The wheel; the alphabet
Direct diffusion	Neighbors through trade, marriage, contact	Coffee and paper on trade routes
Forced diffusion	Conquest or colonization	Imposed institutions
Stimulus diffusion	Borrow the idea, invent the details	Sequoyah’s Cherokee syllabary, about 1821
Syncretism	A blend from sustained contact	Day of the Dead; Haitian Vodou
Assimilation	One-way; the smaller group’s distinctiveness fades	Often under pressure, not free choice
Revitalization	Organized rebuilding under threat (Wallace, 1956)	Ghost Dance (1890); cargo movements
Glocalization	Global forms remade locally	Hybridization rather than sameness

Worked cases

WORKED CASE 1 · TRACING INTEGRATION

In a fictional valley town, Brennick, families who fished by hand begin buying motorboats. Within ten years, young men who own boats marry earlier, older net makers lose status, and the church moves its festival to fit the new fishing calendar. Which feature of culture does this show, and how does the chapter’s classic case compare?

STEP 1 · NAME THE FEATURE

One technology changed marriage, status and ritual at once: culture is **integrated** (holism).

STEP 2 · COMPARE THE CLASSIC CASE

The Skolt Sámi snowmobile, tracked by Pertti Pelto in the 1960s, reorganized herding, split people into machine-rich and machine-poor, drew families into cash and reshaped status.

STEP 3 · AVOID THE TRAP

This is not proof that technology always decides everything; it shows that parts of a culture hang together, so one change ripples outward.

WORKED CASE 2 · MAPPING A RITE OF PASSAGE

In a fictional ceremony, sixteen-year-olds in the town of Oreval leave their families for four nights in a forest camp. They wear identical plain clothes, give up their names and share all chores. On the fifth morning they walk back into town, receive a new adult name and sit with adults at the feast. Map the phases.

STEP 1 · SEPARATION

Leaving families for the camp detaches them from the old status.

STEP 2 · LIMINALITY

The camp, with identical clothes and no names, is the betwixt-and-between phase where ordinary ranks are suspended.

STEP 3 · COMMUNITAS

Shared chores among equals show Turner’s leveling bond.

STEP 4 · INCORPORATION

The new name and the seat at the adults’ table mark re-entry with a recognized new status.

WORKED CASE 3 · FOLKWAY OR MORE?

Sort these fictional norms from the town of Halden: (a) staying quiet in the library, (b) never marrying a first cousin, (c) bringing a small gift to a dinner host, (d) never stealing from a neighbor’s storehouse.

STEP 1 · ASK ABOUT THE SANCTION

Mild disapproval marks a folkway; serious sanction and moral weight mark a more.

STEP 2 · SORT

(a) and (c) are **folkways**. (b) and (d) are **mores**; (b) is an incest rule, the chapter’s example of a more.

STEP 3 · LINK UPWARD

Both kinds of norm flow from values, and all sit inside a worldview.

WORKED CASE 4 · WHICH KIND OF DIFFUSION?

Classify: (a) A trading town adopts a neighbor's pottery glaze after years of market contact. (b) A colonial government makes its language compulsory in schools. (c) Hearing that another people write their speech down, a leader invents a brand new script for his own language.

STEP 1

(a) is **direct diffusion**, through trade and daily contact.

STEP 2

(b) is **forced diffusion**, through colonization. Over time it may push toward assimilation.

STEP 3

(c) is **stimulus diffusion**: the idea is borrowed but every detail is local, like Sequoyah's syllabary.

TRAPS PEOPLE FALL INTO

- **Using culture to mean refinement.** Anthropologists mean small-c culture, the whole learned way of life.
- **Reading "shared" as "identical."** Subcultures and individual variation always exist.
- **Calling relativism moral approval.** It is methodological: understand first, judge second if at all.
- **Crediting Boas with ethnocentrism.** Sumner coined the word (1906); Boas was the great critic of the ladder.
- **Swapping discovery and invention.** Discovery recognizes what exists; invention combines the old into something new.
- **Thinking cultures were pure before contact.** Every culture is a collage of invention and borrowing.
- **Thinking Kula valuables are kept or used.** They are useless as tools and always passed on; their worth is purely symbolic.
- **Treating "cargo cult" as neutral.** Many scholars now say cargo movements, a reasoned response to colonial rule.

Chapter 3 self-test · ten items

1. Why does the chapter contrast a spider spinning a web with a person greeting an elder?

A. To show culture is learned, unlike instinct
B. To show both behaviors are shared by a group
C. To show greeting is coded in human genes
D. To show animals also have symbolic culture

A. To show culture is learned, unlike instinct No human is born knowing how to greet an elder; culture is acquired, while the spider needs no lesson.

2. The Sámi snowmobile case best illustrates which feature of culture?

A. Arbitrariness
B. Enculturation
C. Liminality
D. Integration

D. Integration One machine reshaped herding, wealth, the cash economy and status: change in one part ripples through the whole.

3. During which phase of a rite of passage does Turner’s communitas usually appear?

A. The separation phase
B. The incorporation phase
C. The phase before the rite begins
D. The liminal phase

D. The liminal phase In liminality, ordinary ranks are suspended and initiates feel a leveling bond.

4. Who coined the term ethnocentrism, and where?

A. Franz Boas, in his work on the Kwakwaka’wakw
B. William Graham Sumner, in *Folkways* (1906)
C. Lewis Henry Morgan, in *Ancient Society*
D. Leslie White, in his writing on symbols

B. William Graham Sumner, in *Folkways* (1906) Sumner coined it in 1906; Morgan’s ladder was an example of it.

5. Which statement describes methodological relativism?

A. Every practice is beyond any criticism
B. Only one’s own culture can be judged
C. Cultures should be ranked from simple to complex
D. Suspend judgment long enough to understand

D. Suspend judgment long enough to understand Anthropologists use relativism as a method for understanding, not as blanket moral approval.

6. Why is the link between a symbol and its meaning called arbitrary?

A. Symbols are chosen by a single ruler for everyone
B. Symbols change their meaning every generation
C. Nothing in the form naturally carries the meaning
D. Only written symbols can carry any meaning

C. Nothing in the form naturally carries the meaning There is nothing dog-like in the sound “dog”; the link holds only by agreement.

7. A guest arrives without the customary small gift and gets a few raised eyebrows. What kind of norm was broken?

A. A more
B. A worldview
C. A folkway
D. A taboo

C. A folkway Folkways are everyday etiquette whose violation brings mild disapproval.

8. Sequoyah, who could not read English, invented a syllabary after learning that marks could carry speech. This is

A. stimulus diffusion
B. forced diffusion
C. direct diffusion by trade
D. assimilation

A. stimulus diffusion The idea was borrowed and every detail invented locally.

9. Which example shows syncretism?

A. Day of the Dead blending Indigenous and Catholic practice
B. A small group dropping its own language for a dominant one
C. A prophet leading a movement to renew the earth
D. A village recognizing a new use for a local plant

A. Day of the Dead blending Indigenous and Catholic practice Syncretism fuses elements of two traditions into a new form.

10. Wallace’s revitalization movement is best defined as

A. the slow spread of a single trait between neighboring groups
B. the lifelong learning of one’s own culture from birth
C. an organized effort to build a more satisfying culture
D. a ceremony that marks one person’s change of status

C. an organized effort to build a more satisfying culture Wallace (1956) defined it as a conscious, organized effort; the Ghost Dance is an example.

CHAPTER 4

Language and Communication

Read it in full: **Chapter 4 in the textbook**. Practice it in the lab: **Design Features: What Sets Human Language Apart** and **Does Language Shape Thought? A Test in Color and Space**.

What to know

Linguistic anthropology is one of the four fields, and Franz Boas put language at the center of the discipline. His *Handbook of American Indian Languages* (1911) treated Indigenous North American languages as sophisticated systems, a rebuke to racist rankings of languages, and insisted that each language be described on its own terms rather than forced into the grammar of Latin or English. His student Edward Sapir and Sapir’s student Benjamin Lee Whorf carried the work into language and worldview.

A linguist may study grammar as an abstract system; the linguistic anthropologist studies **language in use**: who says what, to whom, when and to what effect. Fieldwork rests on participant observation and **elicitation**, sitting with a fluent speaker to record words and rebuild the sound system and grammar, increasingly as collaborative, community-based documentation. Pike’s **emic** (from phonemic) captures the distinctions insiders hear as meaningful; **etic** (from phonetic) records everything an outsider can measure.

Malinowski named **phatic communion**, talk whose point is bonding rather than information ("Cold enough for you?"). Dell Hymes built the **ethnography of communication** and the idea of **communicative competence**, the cultural knowledge of how to speak appropriately in each setting. Subfields: descriptive (Boas), historical (Sapir), sociolinguistics (William Labov) and the ethnography of communication (Hymes).

Charles Hockett listed **design features** of human language. **Arbitrariness**: no natural link between sound and meaning (dog, chien, perro), a point Saussure made central; onomatopoeia is the partial exception. **Productivity**: endless new sentences from finite words and rules. **Displacement**: talking about what is not here and now. **Duality of patterning**: a few dozen meaningless sounds recombine into thousands of words. A vervet monkey has distinct alarm calls for leopards, eagles and snakes, and the honeybee waggle dance (decoded by Karl von Frisch) encodes direction and distance, but both are closed systems. Human language is open and learned.

Structure comes in levels. **Phonology** studies **phonemes**, sounds that change meaning (English /l/ and /r/ in light and right; Japanese does not split them). An **allophone** varies without changing meaning (the puff of air on the p of pin but not spin). **Morphology** studies **morphemes**, the smallest meaningful units (cats is cat plus -s). **Syntax** orders words, **semantics** is meaning and **pragmatics** is meaning in context ("Can you pass the salt?" is a request).

Noam Chomsky proposed an innate **Universal Grammar**, a species-wide template including **recursion**, the embedding of phrases inside phrases. Daniel Everett's work with the Pirãhã of the Amazon led him to claim the language lacks recursion and number words, reopening debate about how far culture shapes the language faculty.

The **Sapir-Whorf hypothesis** comes in two strengths. **Linguistic determinism** (language determines thought) is rejected. **Linguistic relativity** (language influences habitual thought, attention and memory) is supported. Whorf's Hopi time claim was criticized; Ekkehart Malotki documented Hopi time expressions Whorf missed. Berlin and Kay (1969) found that languages add basic color terms in a largely predictable order, a universalist finding, yet Russian speakers, with separate words for lighter blue (*goluboy*) and darker blue (*siniy*), discriminate blues slightly faster at that boundary.

Guugu Yimithirr speakers in Australia use cardinal directions instead of left and right, and, as Stephen Levinson documented, point to distant places accurately even indoors. Boroditsky's grammatical gender result comes from an unpublished study, and direct replications failed; treat it as contested. The Amondawa of the Amazon reportedly lack English-style "time as space" metaphors, which does not mean they cannot understand time. The consensus: language is a lens that tilts thought, not a cage.

Nonverbal communication has several domains. **Kinesics** (Ray Birdwhistell) is body motion: posture, face, eyes, gesture. **Proxemics** (Edward T. Hall) is patterned use of space; Hall distinguished intimate, personal, social and public distances, and contact norms differ, as between Mediterranean or Latin American and northern European settings. **Paralanguage** is pitch, loudness, tempo, tone and silence; Keith Basso showed that Western Apache silence is the courteous response to social uncertainty. Haptics (touch) and chronemics (time) vary too.

Paul Ekman and Wallace Friesen sorted gestures. **Emblems** have a direct verbal translation that is culture specific, and they cause the most offense: the "OK" ring, the thumbs-up, palm-up beckoning. In Bulgaria a lateral head shake conventionally means yes. Illustrators paint speech, regulators manage turn-taking and adaptors are self-touching. Ekman argued that a few basic facial expressions are recognized everywhere, a claim now contested because the original studies used forced choices; **display rules** always govern how feelings may be shown. Sign languages such as ASL are full languages with phonology, grammar and duality of patterning.

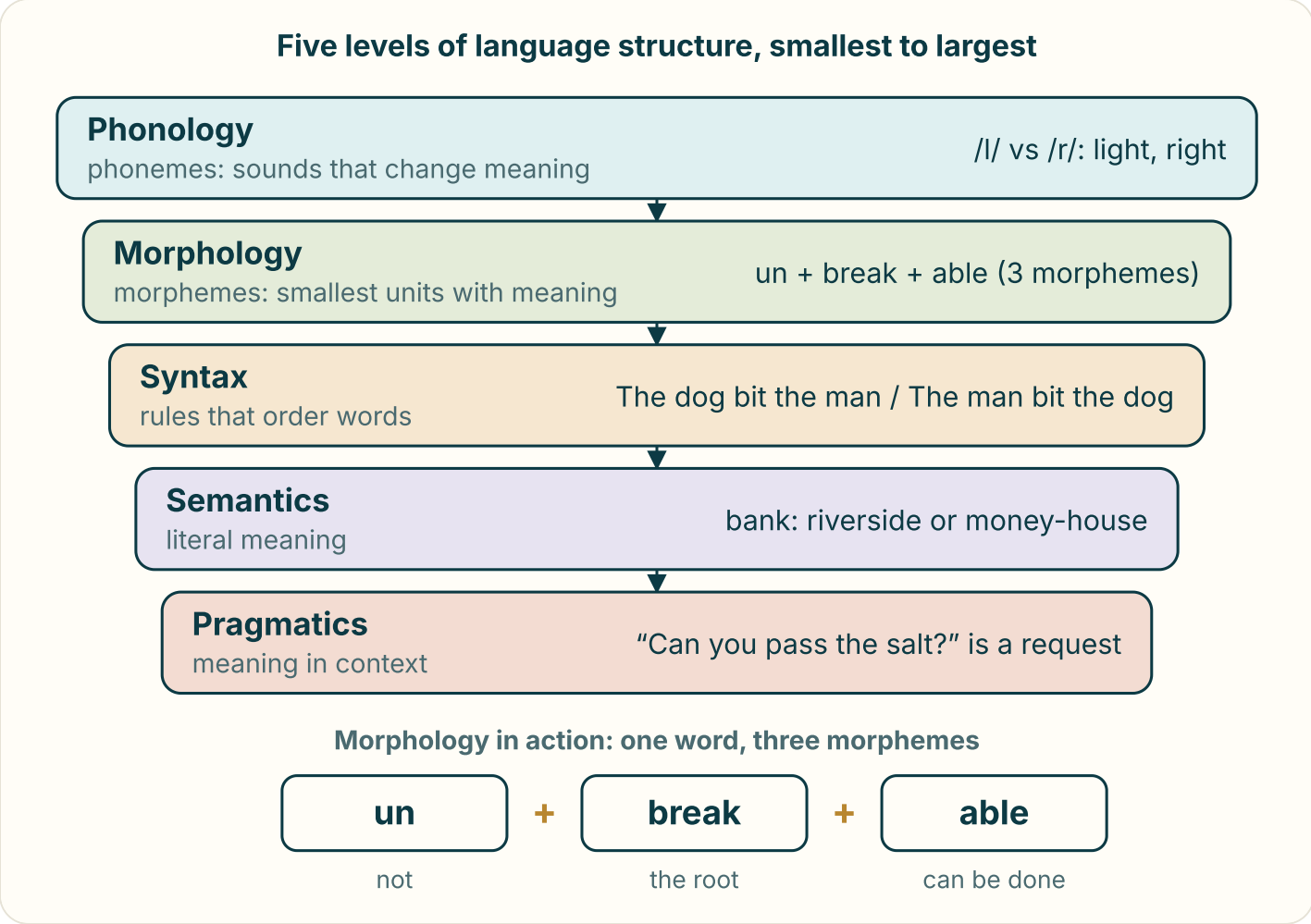
Dialects are mutually intelligible varieties; the dialect versus language line is political ("a language is a dialect with an army and a navy," popularized by Max Weinreich). Labov tied speech to class, age, gender and identity (Martha's Vineyard; the New York department store "r" study) and showed African American English is fully rule governed. **Register** fits speech to setting. **Code-switching** (analyzed by John Gumperz) alternates languages as skilled social work. **Diglossia** (Charles Ferguson) reserves a high variety for formal life and a low one for home. A **pidgin** becomes a **creole** when children acquire it as a first language (Tok Pisin, Haitian Creole).

Of roughly 7,000 languages, about half are endangered. The usual path is **language shift**, a community abandoning its heritage language under economic and political pressure. Anthropologists respond with documentation and support for **revitalization**: Hawaiian and Māori

immersion “language nests,” and the reawakening of Wampanoag from written records by Jessie Little Doe Baird, whose daughter became the first new native speaker in generations.

LOCK THESE IN

- Boas put language at the core; each language described on its own terms (*Handbook*, 1911).
- Hockett’s big four: arbitrariness, productivity, displacement, duality of patterning.
- Phoneme, morpheme, syntax, semantics, pragmatics. Allophones do not change meaning.
- Determinism rejected; relativity supported (Russian blues, Guugu Yimithirr directions).
- Phatic communion (Malinowski); communicative competence (Hymes).
- Kinesics (Birdwhistell), proxemics (Hall), paralanguage; emblems do not translate.
- Dialect, register, code-switching, diglossia; pidgin to creole when children learn it natively.
- About half of about 7,000 languages are endangered through language shift.



Five levels of structure. Each level builds on the one above it: sounds that change meaning, units that carry meaning, the order of words, literal meaning and meaning in context. Unbreakable shows three morphemes in one word.

Design features and levels

Term	Meaning	Example
Arbitrariness	No natural link between sound and meaning	dog, chien, perro
Productivity	Endless new sentences from finite parts	A sentence never said before is understood
Displacement	Talk about what is absent or imagined	Last year’s harvest; a unicorn
Duality of patterning	Meaningless sounds build meaningful units	A few dozen sounds, thousands of words
Phoneme	Smallest sound that changes meaning	/l/ vs /r/ in English
Allophone	Variant sound that does not change meaning	Aspirated p in pin, not in spin
Morpheme	Smallest unit with meaning	un + break + able
Pragmatics	Meaning in context	“Can you pass the salt?” as a request
Recursion	Phrases embedded inside phrases	Chomsky’s claim; Everett’s Pirãhã challenge

Language and thought

Version or finding	Claim	Status or source
Linguistic determinism	Language determines thought	Rejected
Linguistic relativity	Language influences habitual attention and memory	Supported
Universalism	Deep categories shared by all	Partly supported (Berlin and Kay, 1969)
Russian blues	*goluboy* and *siniy* speed discrimination at the boundary	Supports relativity
Guugu Yimithirr	Cardinal directions, not left and right	Levinson; supports relativity
Grammatical gender	Adjectives colored by noun gender	Unpublished; replications failed
Hopi time	Whorf said Hopi lacked a grammar of time	Criticized; Malotki found time expressions

Communication and variation

Term	What it is	Example or source
Kinesics	Body motion: posture, face, eyes, gesture	Birdwhistell
Proxemics	Patterned use of space	Hall: intimate, personal, social, public
Paralanguage	Pitch, tempo, volume, tone, silence	Western Apache silence (Basso)
Emblem	Gesture with a direct, culture-specific translation	Thumbs-up; “OK” ring
Dialect	Mutually intelligible variety	Regional and social varieties
Register	Style fitted to a setting	Interview speech vs talk with friends
Code-switching	Alternating languages in one exchange	Gumperz
Diglossia	High and low varieties with separate roles	Classical vs colloquial Arabic (Ferguson)
Pidgin to creole	Contact language gains native speakers	Tok Pisin; Haitian Creole
Language shift	Heritage language abandoned for a dominant one	The usual path to endangerment

Worked cases

WORKED CASE 1 · TESTING AN ANIMAL SYSTEM AGAINST THE DESIGN FEATURES

A fictional bird species, the copper finch, has five calls: two for hawks, one for snakes, one for food and one for a lost chick. Researchers find the finches never combine calls and never use one about a hawk seen yesterday. Is this a language in Hockett’s sense?

STEP 1 · ARBITRARINESS

The calls may be arbitrary, so that feature alone does not decide the question.

STEP 2 · PRODUCTIVITY

Five fixed calls that never combine cannot generate new messages: no productivity.

STEP 3 · DISPLACEMENT

No calls about yesterday's hawk: no displacement.

STEP 4 · VERDICT

Like the vervet's alarm calls and the honeybee dance, this is a **closed** communication system, not a language. Only the combination of features is uniquely human.

WORKED CASE 2 · BREAKING A WORD INTO LEVELS

Take the English sentence "The unbreakable cups fell." Identify a phoneme contrast, the morphemes in two words and one fact about syntax.

STEP 1 · PHONOLOGY

Cup versus cub differ in one sound, /p/ versus /b/, so these are separate phonemes in English.

STEP 2 · MORPHOLOGY

Unbreakable is un + break + able (three morphemes). Cups is cup + -s (two morphemes).

STEP 3 · SYNTAX

English puts the adjective before the noun and the subject before the verb; reordering to "Fell cups the unbreakable" breaks the rules.

STEP 4 · PRAGMATICS

Said by a parent to a child who dropped them, the sentence might be a reassurance, not a report.

WORKED CASE 3 · JUDGING A WHORF CLAIM

A news article claims, "Since the fictional Teral language has one word covering green and blue, Teral speakers cannot tell grass from sky." Evaluate it.

STEP 1 · IDENTIFY THE VERSION

This is the strong claim, **linguistic determinism**.

STEP 2 · APPLY THE EVIDENCE

Determinism is rejected; people perceive and think about distinctions their language handles clumsily.

STEP 3 · WHAT RELATIVITY PREDICTS

The weak version predicts only small effects on speed or habit, like Russian speakers discriminating blues slightly faster across the *goluboy* and *siniy* boundary.

STEP 4 · REWRITE THE CLAIM

"Teral speakers may be slightly slower to sort shades near that boundary" is a testable relativity claim.

WORKED CASE 4 · NAMING A SPEECH SITUATION

In a fictional town, residents use a formal variety, High Velan, for sermons and news, and Street Velan at home. A teenager switches between Velan and English mid-sentence with friends. A trade language on the docks, Dockspeak, has started to be learned by children as their first language.

STEP 1

High and Street Velan with separate roles is **diglossia**.

STEP 2

Switching languages mid-sentence is **code-switching**, skilled social work, not confusion.

STEP 3

Dockspeak began as a **pidgin**; once children acquire it natively, it is becoming a **creole**.

TRAPS PEOPLE FALL INTO

- **Saying animals have no communication.** Vervets and bees communicate; their systems are closed, not absent.
- **Calling sign language gesture.** ASL is a full language with phonology and grammar.
- **Treating Sapir-Whorf as all or nothing.** Determinism is rejected; relativity is supported.
- **Citing the gender adjective study as proof.** It is unpublished and replications failed.
- **Calling stigmatized varieties broken.** African American English is fully rule governed.
- **Confusing phoneme and morpheme.** A phoneme is a sound that changes meaning; a morpheme carries meaning.
- **Assuming gestures are universal.** Emblems vary; in Bulgaria a lateral head shake means yes.
- **Swapping pidgin and creole.** A creole is a pidgin that children speak as a first language.

Chapter 4 self-test · ten items

1. What did Boas's *Handbook of American Indian Languages* (1911) insist on?

A. Ranking languages from simple to advanced
B. Fitting every language into Latin grammar
C. Describing each language on its own terms
D. Replacing field recordings with surveys

C. Describing each language on its own terms Boas treated Indigenous languages as sophisticated systems, rebuking racist rankings.

2. “Nice weather today” said to a neighbor mainly to be friendly is an example of

A. phatic communion
B. diglossia
C. displacement
D. code-switching

A. phatic communion Malinowski’s term names talk whose point is bonding, not information.

3. Talking about a storm that hit three years ago uses which design feature?

A. Arbitrariness
B. Duality of patterning
C. Paralanguage
D. Displacement

D. Displacement Displacement lets us talk about what is not here and now.

4. The aspirated p in pin and the plain p in spin do not change meaning in English. They are

A. two separate morphemes
B. allophones of one phoneme
C. two separate phonemes of English
D. examples of pragmatics

B. allophones of one phoneme Sounds that vary without changing meaning are allophones.

5. Which finding supports linguistic relativity?

A. All languages add basic color terms in random order
B. Russian speakers discriminate light and dark blue faster at that boundary
C. Speakers cannot think about colors they have no words for
D. Grammatical gender always shapes how objects are described

B. Russian speakers discriminate light and dark blue faster at that boundary The Russian blues result shows a modest effect on habitual perception, the weak claim.

6. Whose work with the Pirãhã challenged the claim that recursion is universal?

A. Noam Chomsky
B. Dell Hymes
C. Daniel Everett
D. Edward T. Hall

C. Daniel Everett Everett claimed the language lacks recursion and number words.

7. Edward T. Hall's term for the cultural use of interpersonal space is

A. kinesics
B. paralanguage
C. proxemics
D. chronemics

C. proxemics Hall distinguished intimate, personal, social and public distances.

8. Among the Western Apache, Basso found that silence when meeting strangers signals

A. courtesy in a situation of social uncertainty
B. anger and distrust toward the newcomer
C. a lack of fluency in the Apache language
D. a wish to end the visit as soon as it politely can

A. courtesy in a situation of social uncertainty Silence there is the appropriate response to uncertainty, not coldness.

9. A community uses a formal variety for sermons and a casual variety at home. This is

A. a creole
B. diglossia
C. a dialect continuum
D. phatic communion

B. diglossia Ferguson named diglossia: a high variety for formal life, a low variety for everyday life.

10. What is the usual path by which languages become endangered?

A. Sudden loss of all grammar within a single generation
B. Creolization of the heritage language
C. Children inventing new phonemes
D. Language shift toward a dominant language

D. Language shift toward a dominant language Under economic and political pressure, communities gradually abandon the heritage tongue.

Cram sheet

Everything from chapters 3 and 4 in one place. Cover the right column and see if you can rebuild each row.

Names and dates

Who	Date or work	Remember for
Tylor	*Primitive Culture*, 1871	Culture as the complex whole
Morgan	*Ancient Society*, 1877	Savagery, barbarism, civilization ladder
Sumner	*Folkways*, 1906	Ethnocentrism; folkways and mores
Van Gennep	*Les rites de passage*, 1909	Separation, liminality, incorporation
Boas	*Handbook*, 1911	Relativism; language on its own terms
Mead	*Coming of Age in Samoa*, 1928	Culture shapes adolescence
Linton	1937	“One Hundred Per-Cent American”
Wallace	1956	Revitalization movements
Service	1962	Band, tribe, chiefdom, state
Berlin and Kay	1969	Basic color terms in a predictable order
Sequoyah	About 1821	Cherokee syllabary, stimulus diffusion
Ghost Dance	1890	Revitalization; Wovoka; Wounded Knee

Pairs and lists

Item	Contents
Features of culture	Learned, shared, symbolic, integrated
Folkway / more	Mild sanction / serious moral sanction
Discovery / invention	Recognize what exists / combine the old into new
Diffusion routes	Direct, forced, stimulus
Acculturation outcomes	Syncretism (blend) or assimilation (one way)
Hockett's four	Arbitrariness, productivity, displacement, duality of patterning
Levels	Phoneme, morpheme, syntax, semantics, pragmatics
Sapir-Whorf	Determinism rejected; relativity supported
Nonverbal	Kinesics, proxemics, paralanguage, haptics, chronemics
Gesture types	Emblems, illustrators, regulators, adaptors
Variation	Dialect, register, code-switching, diglossia, pidgin to creole

Thinkers on language

Person	Contribution
Malinowski	Phatic communion
Hymes	Communicative competence; ethnography of communication
Labov	Sociolinguistics; Martha’s Vineyard; New York “r”
Chomsky / Everett	Universal Grammar / Pirãhã challenge
Levinson	Guugu Yimithirr direction tracking
Malotki	Documented Hopi time expressions Whorf missed
Birdwhistell / Hall	Kinesics / proxemics
Ekman and Friesen	Gesture types; contested universal facial expressions
Basso	Western Apache silence
Ferguson / Gumperz	Diglossia / code-switching

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