

# [Speech acquisition](https://assignbuster.com/speech-acquisition/)

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Language Human language has six unique properties, which include: Arbitrariness- refers to the chance relationship between linguistic signs and the specific objects they represent. Often, the linguistic symbols do not fit the objects they denote (Yule, 2010).   
Discreteness-refers to the discreteness of the sounds used in language. Each pronunciation is interpreted as a meaningful distinct sound (Yule, 2010).   
Displacement-refers to human’s ability to use language when referring to things, people or events that are absent from the immediate environment (Yule, 2010).   
Productivity- refers to users’ ability to create novel utterances (Yule, 2010).   
Duality- refers to how language is organized into two tiers concurrently whereby, one level consists of distinct sounds while the other consists of distinct meanings. On their own, consonants and vowels have no intrinsic meaning; however, when combined differently they form different words with distinct meanings (Yule, 2010).   
Cultural transmission- refers to the process of language acquisition whereby, infants learn language via socialization (Yule, 2010).   
In my opinion, duality and productivity represent the most important properties of the human language. The potential number of utterances is infinite; a reflection of humans’ innovativeness. The productivity property allows for the creation of new languages, which seclude and unite people concurrently. Those in the out-group are unable to comprehend the new utterances while the reverse holds true for members of the in-group. In addition, the duality property enables humans to combine different letters to form words and decide their meanings.   
In my opinion, speech is not special. A comparison of objects of speech and those of non-linguistic environmental sounds such as clucks and beeps or hands clapping among others reveals that they are all perceived in the same manner, as they are all sounds. Hauser et al, 2002 infers that auditory perception and speech perception belong to the same ontological grouping or types of sounds.   
Infants acquire language at a very fast rate due to the sensitive critical periods present during this stage of development. Language acquisition becomes harder with the increase in age. Therefore, Jim and Sue’s one-year old infant would learn the new language faster compared to the same child at ten years of age.   
References   
Hauser, M. D., Chomsky, N., and Fitch, W. T. (2002). The faculty of language: what is it, who has it, and how did it evolve? Science, 298: 1569–1579   
Yule, G. (2010). The Study of Language. London: Cambridge . p. 11