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LANGUAGE UNIVERSIALS AND THEIR CHARACTERISTICS FEATURES

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**Annotation:** Most linguists suggest that all languages have some universal principles, even though a significant number of languages worldwide appear to have nothing in common at first glance. These guidelines comprise an established body of rules known as a Universal Grammar. It is true that the way sentences are formed in Hungarian, an agglutinative language, and Farsi, a fusional language that is modern Persian, appears to have very little, if anything, in common. It's also true that Italian verbs have six conjugations, while Chinese verbs have none (they are inflected for number, tense, etc.). Nonetheless, it is evident that all four of these languages use verbs and follow a similar pattern of sentence construction.

**Key words:** Language universals, Their structure, Universal Grammar, Characteristic features.

### Universal Principles in General

The world's languages appear to have a lot of similarities. Some are more fundamental—like the concept of a "sentence" or "verb"—while others are more intricate—like the Wh-movement, which forms content questions. Furthermore, not every one of these traits can be observed to the same degree. Absolute universals are the norms that all languages, with very few or no exceptions, have in common. Think about the following claims.

The grammatical structures required to convey commands, refute ideas, and pose questions are present in all languages.

Verbs that can be understood as occurring in the past, present, or future are used in all languages.

Every language has a limited number of phonemes, or sounds, which are composed of vowels and consonants and combined to create syllables and words. The



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fundamental word categories—nouns, verbs, description words, relative clauses, and a counting system—are shared by all languages.

Every language use pronouns.

Any combination or subclass of the fundamental five colors—red, blue, yellow, black, and white—is included in all languages. Did you know that every language uses the colors red, white, and black.

Relative universals, sometimes known as universal tendencies, are those linguistic characteristics that are present in many but not all languages. These include the fact that although many languages lack nasal stops, the majority of them do. or that nasality and the voicing of obstruents are included in the phonemic inventories of the majority of languages. Most languages have a vowel in the nucleus whereas some, like Berber, allow consonants in the nucleus. Syllables are made up of different combinations of vowels and consonants. Adjectives have their own category in most languages, however in Blackfoot, an American Indian language, nouns are described by the stative verb "to be."

Implicit universals are a different kind. In other words, the existence of X in a language denotes the existence of Y. For example, gender categories for pronouns will likewise exist in languages that have gender categories for nouns, according to Greenberg. A language will also have number categories if it has gender categories.

In addition to assisting linguists in comprehending the nature of particular languages as well as all languages, these universal principles also provide insight into the nature of language acquisition and usage in humans.

Every language has a basic word order consisting of subject, verb, and object, albeit there are differences. Basic grammatical categories, such as nouns and verbs, are shared by all languages. Vowels and consonants are two distinct sound categories that make up every spoken language.

Universals can be found at all levels of language analysis, including phonology, morphology, syntax, and semantics

A pattern that consistently appears in most natural languages—possibly all of them—is known as a linguistic universal. For instance, all languages have verbs and nouns, and all spoken languages have vowels and consonants. The goal of this field of linguistics research is to identify cross-linguistic generalizations that are probably related to perception, cognition, or other mental processes. It is closely related to the study of linguistic typology. The topic was largely pioneered by the linguist Joseph Greenberg, who produced a list of forty-five basic universals, mostly dealing with



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syntax, from a study of about thirty languages. The field originates from talks influenced by Noam Chomsky's idea of a Universal Grammar.

Despite a great deal of research on linguistic universals, some linguists, such as Stephen C. Levinson and Nicolas Evans, have argued against the existence of absolute linguistic universals that apply to all languages in more recent times. These linguists promote these parallels as merely strong tendencies, citing issues like ethnocentrism among cognitive scientists and linguists as well as inadequate research into all of the world's languages in talks connected to linguistic universals.

Formal universals are then the rules that we use to form meaningful syllables, phrases, sentences. For example, phrase structure rules determine how phrases and sentences can be build up from words

The formal universals consist of a set of linguistic levels on which the different aspects of the structure of linguistic expressions are to be represented and a characterization of the general form of possible grammars, i.e. of systems of rules, which specify the structural aspects and their interrelations for the language universals.

(1)Language Universals: (All) human languages share certain properties.

(2)Convergence: Children are exposed to different input yet converge on the same grammar.

(3)Poverty of the Stimulus: Children acquire knowledge for which there is no evidence in the input.

**In conclusion.** A linguistic universal is a pattern that occurs systematically across natural languages, potentially true for all of them. For example, All languages have nouns and verbs, or If a language is spoken, it has consonants and vowels. One common explanation for language universals is the innateness hypothesis, the idea that our ability to use language is a part of our genetic endowment, and that genetics also determines many details in the form and structure of languages. This “universal grammar theory” suggests that every language has some of the same laws. For example, every language has a way to ask a question or make something negative. In addition, every language has a way to identify gender or show that something happened in the past or present.

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