

2/14/01

SOUND AND MEANING

There is a difference between animal and human language. Animal life consists of danger, and there are other creatures that communicate location, for instance the bees have a way to communicate to its workers where a supply of nectar is located; and the animal communicates approaching danger to other animals with sound and body movement.

Humans have a combination of creative ways to communicate with each other with short repetitive sentence, i.e.: **Ash̄m!** 'Come inside!'; **Aw iwa tkwatat!** 'It is time to eat now!'

Mish nam misha?	What are you doing?
Shin nam waniksha?	What is your name?
Tax̄shik! Shmat'atak!	Wake up! Go wash your face!
Aw Ayik, winaniitak!	Get up now, go take a bath!

A human speaker can create and understand many daily means of verbal expression heard and repeated. Learning to speak is acquired when one listens to words spoken around him, and it is compared to the surroundings it involves. The environment helps to memorize the word in relation to its location. Take the first phrase:

1. **Ash̄m!** It relates to someone who is standing *outside, and the speaker indicated with his hand movement or a nod of his head inviting him inside.* The learner relates that phrase to 'going inside.' The next time, he will remember it.

2. **Aw iwa tkwatat!** The patient smells the food. It relates to **food.** 'It is time to eat!'

3. **Tax̄shik!** You are awakened from sleep. It has something to do with **waking up.**
At'atak! A person **goes to the bathroom** when he awakes up in the morning.
Shmat'ak! What he does next, he washes his face. 'Go wash your face!'
Winaniitak! A person usually **takes a bath** in the morning before he goes to work.
Taatpasik! After he takes a bath he will 'dress' himself.

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4. **Shin nam waniksha?** **Shin** means **who**, a person will memorize the word who, and the next time he hears it, he will remember it relates to **identifying someone**, and it is a question about someone. He probably heard the word **wanikt** and thinks, '**that mean name**', and eventually he is rationalizing the question. *What is your name?*

The human ability to create and understand novel sentences cannot be accounted for by any appeal to the human capacity for analogizing. Some people maintained that new sentences are constructed by analogy from sentences previously experiences. Suppose for example, that someone has heard and remembered these sentences:

Inmisht iwapiitata iix̄t tikaytikay. My daughter will help wash dishes.

Inpnach iwapiitata shapapikt taatpastaatpas. My daughter-in-law will help wash clothes.

Inmisht iwapiitata shapapiktyaw taatpas. My daughter will help wash clothes.

Inpnach iwapiitata iix̄tyaw tikay. My daughter-in-law will help wash dishes.