Handout 6

Pinker 2000, pp. 1-22

1 Why did Pinker assume that irregular and regular verbs made a good object of scientific inquiry in cognitive psychology?

2 What are the decisive properties of words and rules in terms of …..
- mental representation
- acquisition
- storage capacity
- cerebral location

3 Explain and discuss the pairing of sound and meaning in the following English words.
- *rose*
- *oink*
- *swish*
- *aarrrgh*

4 What did Ferdinand de Saussure mean when he called words 'arbitrary signs'?

5 Try and complete the following lexicon entry for the verb *to congratulate* Pinker style.

V

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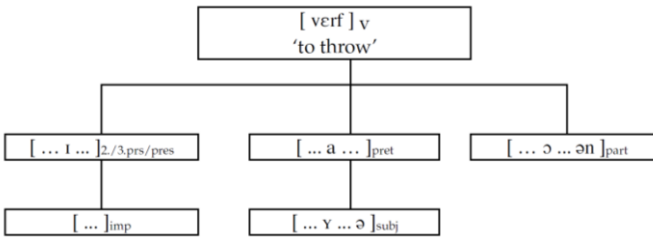
congratulate

6 Discuss the following "fantastic" and "powerful" properties generative grammar rules have according to Pinker.
- productive
- symbolic
- combinatorial

7 What did the famous *wug*-Experiment by Berko tell us about child language acquisition?

8 Discuss the difference between the following to morphological representations of the German verb *werfen* and *kochen* in a speaker's mind.



koch – en

V

V {PAST 1. pers. sogl. …..} → _____ *te* #

9 Illustrate the principle of recursion with an example of your choice?