

言語学

- (1) あなたが興味を持っている言語（複数でもよい）を示し、その言語のどのような点に興味を持っているかを述べなさい。
- (2) 以下の文章を読んで、著者の述べていること（特に下線部）について、ここにあげられているもの以外の具体例をあげて検討しなさい。

Investigating language use, we find that words are interpreted in terms of such factors as material constitution, design, intended and characteristic use, institutional role, and so on. Things are identified and assigned to categories in terms of such properties — which I am taking to be semantic features — on a par with phonetic features that determine its sound. The use of language can attend in various ways to these semantic features. Suppose the library has two copies of Tolstoy's *War and Peace*, Peter takes out one, and John the other. Did Peter and John take out the same book, or different books? If we attend to the material factor of the lexical item, they took out different books; if we focus on its abstract component, they took out the same book. We can attend to both material and abstract factors simultaneously, as when we say that “the book that he is planning will weigh at least five pounds if he ever writes it,” or “his book is in every store in the country.” Similarly, we can paint the door white and walk through it, using the pronoun “it” to refer ambiguously to figure and ground. We can report that the bank was blown up after it raised the interest rate, or that it raised the rate to keep from being blown up. Here the pronoun “it,” and the “empty category” that is the subject of “being blown up,” simultaneously adopt both the material and institutional factors.

The facts about such matters are often clear, but not trivial. Thus referentially dependent elements, even the most narrowly constrained, observe some distinctions but ignore others, in ways that vary for different types of words in curious ways. Such properties can be investigated in many ways: language acquisition, generality among languages, invented forms, etc. What we discover is surprisingly intricate; and, not surprisingly, known in advance of any evidence, hence shared among languages. There is no *a priori* reason to expect that human language will have such properties; Martian could be different. The symbolic systems of science and mathematics surely are. No one knows to what extent the specific properties of human language are a consequence of general biochemical laws applying to objects with general features of the brain, another important problem at a still distant horizon.

(Noam Chomsky, *New Horizons in the Study of Language and Mind* より)