

## Chapter Two: Properties of Human Language

### 1. UNIQUE PROPERTIES OF HUMAN LANGUAGE

**Arbitrariness** → no natural relation between a linguistic form and its meaning

**Duality of patterning** → meaningful whole is made up of meaningless parts

➤ **Note:** *economical feature*

**Cultural transmission** → a language is passed on from one generation to the next

➤ **Note:** *innateness* of animal language

**Displacement** → meanings are expressed which are displaced or removed from the concrete or physical presence of the object

**Productivity** → a finite set of forms are employed to produce infinite meaning

**Openness:** creation of new morphemes to express new ideas

**Recursion:** phrases expand by the expression of phrases within them

➤ **Note:** *fixed-reference* feature of animal language

**Discreteness** → flow of speech is perceived to be made up of distinct sounds

**Grammaticality** → languages have rather strict rules about how things may be said

**Reflexiveness** → language is used to talk about language

**Prevarication** → make false statements, lie, and make nonsense statements

### 2. PROPERTIES COMMON BETWEEN HUMAN AND ANIMAL LANGUAGE

**Vocal-auditory** → communication signals are generated via the vocal organs and perceived via the ears

**Reciprocity** → speaker/sender of a linguistic signal can also be a listener/ receiver

**Specialization** → linguistic signals do not normally serve any other type of purpose

**Rapid fade** → linguistic signals are produced and disappear quickly

**Non-directionality** → language signals have no inherent direction