

Knowledge of Linguistics and Teaching: What's the Connection?

Resources: J. Flaitz, J. Govoni, C. Lovell
with Google images

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Learning Outcome

To demonstrate knowledge of the **structure and use of English** in supporting ELs



Why the English Language is Hard to Learn

Read the poem at either URL below:

Why English is so hard - [Poem](#)

OR

Why English is so hard- [A Poem](#)



Second Language Acquisition

Branch of linguistics examining the ways to acquire another language



Can you answer these questions?

1. What do you eat with *ghoti*?
2. What is the difference between 'knight' & 'knave'?
3. Do sentences grow on trees?
4. Can “colourless green ideas sleep furiously”?

Question #1

What do you eat with ghoti?

Your Answer:

The linguistic answer:

[gh]	=	laugh	=	<u>F</u> <u>I</u> <u>S</u> <u>H</u>
[i]	=	women		
[ti]	=	nation		

POINT: We spell some words in English in ways that bear no resemblance to the way they are pronounced.

“Ghoti” was invented by the playwright George Bernard Shaw to show the illogicality of English spelling.

Question #2

What is the difference between a knight and a knave?

Your Answer:

Answer:

Knight: a person of noble birth who holds a dignified position

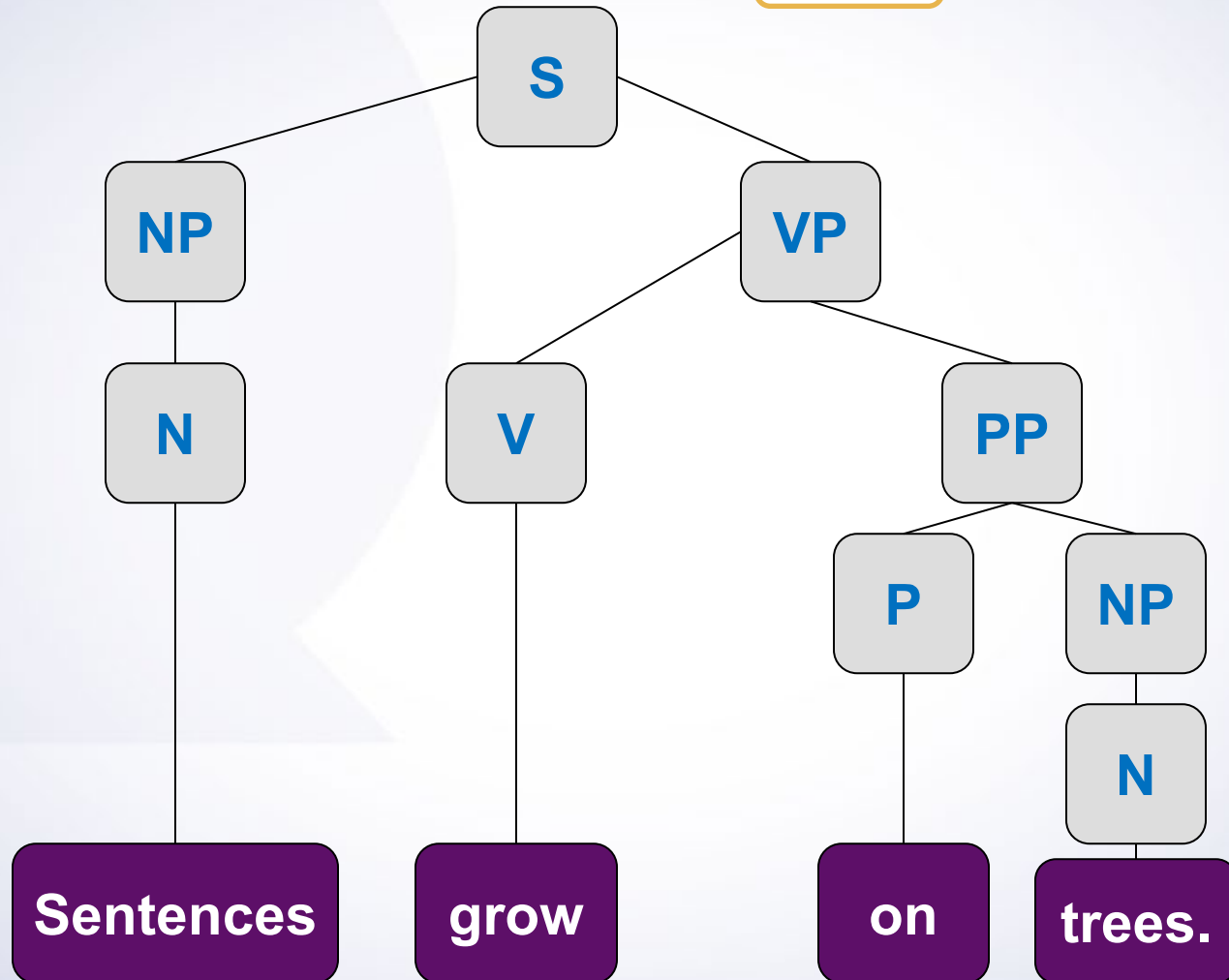
Knave: a dishonest and untrustworthy person

Yet, years ago 'knave' and 'knight' both meant 'boy'.

POINT: Meanings of words (and pronunciation) change over time.

Question #3

Do sentences grow on trees?

Answer: **Yes**

Question #4

Can ‘*colourless green ideas sleep furiously*’?

Answer:

Yes/No

Yes...the sentence is grammatically correct.

No...because you can't make sense of it in the ‘real world’.

It is not just correct grammar that makes a sentence sensible, but the context in which it is created.



- **Linguistics...**
is the science of language.



- **Linguists ...**
 - attempt to understand why the human language is the way it is.
 - study the history, acquisition, structure, and use of as many languages as possible.

How is knowledge of linguistics connected to teaching?

- provides an understanding of the sub-fields of linguistics (phonology, morphology, syntax, semantics, pragmatics)
- poses questions such as...
 - **How do I understand language?**
 - **How does language operate in my classroom? In my school community?**
 - **How might the language I use shape me as a person? As a teacher? A colleague?**
 - **How does language shape my classroom? My students? ELs? Families of ELs?**



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