

Five Useful Linguistic Principles

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1. Language is always changing

- Change is OK
- Language is infinite
- Changes follow general patterns
 - Simplicity
 - Analogy
 - “Gresham’s Law”

Example 1




Example 2

- “Hook Up”



2. Language and Culture are Interconnected

- Sapir-Worf hypothesis
- Example 1: ASL debate
- Example 2: French email



3. All native language varieties are grammatical, but some varieties have more prestige than others

- Language communicates directly and indirectly
- Code switching
- “Standard Written English”



4. Oral and written languages are distinct

- Oral language precedes written
- Our class will discuss elements of both systems



5. Ethical language use is a choice

- Language is power
- Words can hurt and heal
- Example: “Political correctness”