

Pinker, Steven. 1994. *The Language Instinct: How the Human Mind Creates Language*.
New York: Morrow.

Exercises

- The following sentences contain verbs created from nouns in accordance with the process described in Section 2 of this chapter. Describe the meaning of each of these new verbs.
 - We punk-rocked the night away.
 - She dog-teamed her way across the Arctic.
 - We MG'd to Oregon.
 - You should Band-Aid that cut.
 - He Gretzky'd his way to the net.
 - We Greyhounded to Columbus.
 - We'll have to Ajax the sink.
 - He Windexed the windows.
 - You should Clairol your hair.
 - Let's carton the eggs.
- Using the examples in the preceding exercise as a model, create five new verbs from nouns. Build a sentence around each of these new verbs to show its meaning.
- Which of the following forms are possible words of English? Solicit the help of an acquaintance and see if you agree on your judgments.
 - mbood
 - frall
 - coofp
 - ktleem
 - sproke
 - flube
 - wordms
 - bsarn
- Imagine that you are an advertising executive and that your job involves inventing new names for products. Create four new forms that are possible words of English and four that are not.
- Part of linguistic competence involves the ability to recognize whether novel utterances are acceptable. Consider the following sentences and determine which are possible sentences in English. For each unacceptable sentence, change the sentence to make it acceptable, and compare the two.
 - Jason's mother left himself with nothing to eat.
 - Miriam is eager to talk to.
 - This is the man who I took a picture of.
 - Colin made Jane a sandwich.
 - Is the dog sleeping the bone again?
 - Wayne prepared Zena a cake.
 - Max cleaned the garden up.
 - Max cleaned up the garden.
 - Max cleaned up it.
 - I desire you to leave.
 - That you likes liver surprises me.

6. Consider the following sentences, each of which is acceptable to some speakers of English. Try to identify the prescriptive rules that are violated in each case.
- a) He don't know about the race.
 - b) You was out when I called.
 - c) There's twenty horses registered in the show.
 - d) That window's broke, so be careful.
 - e) Jim and me are gonna go campin' this weekend.
 - f) Who did you come with?
 - g) I seen the parade last week.
 - h) He been lost in the woods for ten days.
 - i) My car needs cleaned 'cause of all the rain.
 - j) Julie ain't got none.
 - k) Somebody left their book on the train.
 - l) Murray hurt hissself in the game.

What is the reaction of linguists to the claim that sentences of this sort are wrong?