QUESTIONS TO TACKLE in class:

1. **In what ways is language related to our brain and mind?**
2. **Why do we talk?**
3. **Language in a community: When and where did language start?**

**Do we invent language or come to BE through language?**

 **“***pressing needs“*

Bows and arrows analogy

1. **Is ART an evidence of thinking and speaking?**
2. **How did language humanize us in anatomy, genes, brain and cognition?**

 When did human ancestors start behaving modern/using modern l.?

 Genetically „touched by God“

 Anatomically adjusted for articulating and speaking

 Larynx, hyiod bone supporting the tongue

 Composing out of sounds that are „meaningful“

auditory capacity – handling l. sounds

capacity for interchangeability – hearing while speaking

 dependent on our modern/ advanced brain and its neural activity, i.e.

 neural control over L: speaking, signing and thinking

 translating sound vibrations of HL sounds into neural activity

 manipulating symbols

 remembering

1. **Is language natural and instinctive?**
2. **What characteristics make language work the way it does?**

What is the “language design“?

1. **When did we learn/****start to think?**

What actually happened on the „day we started to think“?

 Any evidence?

In what “symbolic activity” that marked our beginnings were humans involved?

 “Living in a world created in our heads” implies that…

 Self-reflection, inner talk

 displacement

 arbitrary nature of l.

 words as signs, L. as signing activity

 compositionality

 creativity and recursitivity/recursion

1. **In what ways is our language universal and in what ways it is not?**
2. **What can we do with l. that other primates or animals can’t (or can partially)?**

 Reflect and refer

 Plan and reason

 Listen while speaking and thinking

 Conceptualize/draw out the “essence”

 Use conventions, signs, symbols

 Understand metaphors and ambiguity

 Communicate directly and indirectly

 Share in imagination/imagine together

 Spread information

 Socialize

 Tell stories

 vs. other animals – remember, plan, intend, desire etc. but don’t…

1. **What makes the phenomenon of language possible?**

 Human commitment to arbitrary language and grammar defined by constraints of the general cognition

“Language” of hominids? 6 – 3 mill. yrs ago?

Modern l. of Homo sapiens sapiens?

Descartes on language