

LINGUISTICS

В данной статье рассматриваются технологии, как совокупность приемов и методы обучения иностранному языку и их реализации на практике. Групповые методы обучения предполагают разработку замысла, идеи и детальное планирование каждого урока. При этом имеется в виду разработка не только главной идеи, но и условий ее реализации.

The word linguistics originates from the Latin word *Lingua* which means “tongue». Linguistics must, therefore, certainly deal with language .This reminds me of the following quotation I had come across when I had started studying linguistics.

The gift of language is the single human trait that marks us all genetically, setting us apart from the rest of life.

Lewis Thomas, *The Lives of a Cell*

You may be now wondering as to what there is to study about language .after all speaking or writing one’s native language is the most natural and effortless task. We do it all the time. Language is in and around us. Therefore, apart from a few rules of grammar and pronunciation, what else is their to explain about (human) language?

But it turns out that there is a great deal to explain if we actually “step outside” language and look at it as an object to be consciously studied and not merely used.

At this point, I would like you to pause for 10-15 minutes and think about when we need language and why we need language.

Answers to such questions, think will (a) serve as an appropriate introduction to the course in linguistics and (b) make you aware of problems and issues with regard to linguistics, which you had not been aware of before.

What linguistics isn’t Before we actually begin to define linguistics let us first understand what NOT linguistics is.

You read earlier in the introduction that everybody is interested in language to some extent. Most people are only concerned with language when they have a difficulty with it – they cannot find the right words for what they want to say or they cannot remember how to spell a word. They often have trouble with punctuation. They may even find it hard to learn a new language .This, however, does not imply that linguistics is a collection of methods to help people with language problems. Linguistics is not a way to solve the problems of language users.

A few people are fascinated – they learn lost of languages, play scrabble, do crosswords, like looking at dictionaries, and admire beautiful and elegant language. This again does not mean that these people are doing linguistics .Linguistics is not an informal interest in language, however strong that interest may be.

Some people work with language all the time. Authors and journalists write books and articles, politicians’ makes speeches. Translators take ideas from one language and recreate them in another language. Advertisers choose the best words to sell a product. But using a language is not linguistics. Because, using a language is not the same as studying a language .Linguistics is the objective study of; language and not the use of language.

Many people discuss language: literary critics analyze a writer’s language, lexicographers look carefully at how words are used .Philologists look at how languages change over time and philosophers have written about language and its relation to thought and knowledge. Logicians, psychologists, sociologists, communications engineers, all these and many other find specific points of interest in the structure and function of natural language. But linguistics is not an interest in language for some other purpose. It is an interest in language for studying language itself.

Linguistics differs from all these other disciplines in having no necessary external motivation (doesn’t this remind you of the pre-raphalite period when art was studied for the sake of art?) The linguistic study of language is unique in approaching these phenomena from within, in order to study language itself rather than studying something else through the medium of language .Most linguistics would reply study language because language interests them. They derive the same pleasure that a mathematician derives while struggling with theories or the poet writing poems.

And I think most linguists would accept this distinction, despite the influential recent claim of “generative grammar” that it is the business of linguistics to study the human mind.

What linguistics is. Having seen what linguistics is NOT you are probably wondering by now what this leaves. Let us, then, begin to look more positively at linguistics by looking at some questions about language. Two such questions are: how many languages are there in the world? And what are the main differences and similarities between them? These are not simple questions. If we want to know how many languages there are in the world, we have to first agree on what counts as language. That is, should we count Danish and Norwegian as two distinct languages where people can understand each other or count the three types of English-Northern British English, Broad West Country English and New Zealand English as three varieties of one language when people cannot understand each other? (You will read about this, in detail, in the unit dealing with sociolinguistics but let me clarify this point here itself. In linguistics, a distinction is made between a dialect and a language. If there are two varieties and the speakers of one variety do not **understand the other variety** then they are called two different languages, and if the speakers of one variety **understand** the other variety then they are two different dialects of the same language).

Looking at similarities and differences between languages is also not straightforward. People who have learned a foreign language can easily point out one or two sounds which are different from English. For example, the sounds at the beginning of the German word **Zahn** “tooth». Similarly the word-order (that is in a sentence should the article follow the noun or precede it? Should the verb follow the object or precede it.) German is different from that of English: **Haute habe das Buck gelesen**, translated word for word comes out as Today have I the book read. Then there are words, which are difficult to translate into English: For example **Praktikantenaansweis** in German. Again, **what** counts as polite also varies from language to language. English softens the blow by using Will you?..... or would you mind , whereas in German, Telugu and several other languages the politeness markers are not the modals. These languages have different degrees of politeness expressed with the help of pronouns. That is, the markers for politeness also vary from language to language.

If we want to study these matters in more depth we have to look at four types of difference between languages: **pronunciation, vocabulary, grammar** and **relationships between speakers**. What we, therefore, need to agree on is the basic terminology which we can use to talk about language.

Linguistics, then, is a field which classifies the pronunciation, grammar, meaning and use of language and hence provides terminology to talk about these matters. However, this way of thinking makes the field sound as if its role is purely to serve other fields of knowledge. If linguistics merely provides terminology which can be used by lexicographers, translators, speech therapists, language teachers, scrabble enthusiasts, then the field is no doubt useful, but not very exciting or high-powered from the point of view of theoretical linguists who are interested in finding out how we learn languages, what is in mind of human beings which facilitates language learning, how this knowledge is encoded in the mind /brain or how this knowledge arises in the mind /brain.

Linguistics in a historical context. Branches of linguistics. In this section we shall try to give you a fair idea of some of the major concerns of linguists by acquainting you with different dimensions of linguistics, with different levels at which linguistic analysis can be made and with several interdisciplinary fields relating to linguistics

Dimensions of linguistics. Linguistics can be studied from different perspectives. Some of these dimensions of linguistics are represented below

These dimensions can be distinguished, depending on the focus and interest of the linguist. We therefore have diachronic and synchronic linguistics- developed as a result of the distinction. Diachronic linguistics is the study of language change. It is concerned with the historical development of the language through time. A study of the history of the Hindi language will be a diachronic study. Synchronic linguistics is the study of language states, regardless of their history. That is, a study of language as it exists at a particular point of time. Hence if we make a study of French as it was spoken in the 1960s or of the English language of Chaucer's time, it would be a synchronic study. When linguists try to establish general principles or the study of all languages, they are said to be practicing **theoretical linguistics**. When they concentrate on establishing the facts of particular language system, they practice descriptive linguistics. When the focus is on the similarities and differences between languages, the subject is often referred to as **comparative linguistics**. And the application of the concepts and the methods used in linguistics to other areas like language teaching, translation or testing as called **applied linguistics**.

Levels of linguistics analysis. You know that speakers of a language are able to produce and understand an unlimited number of utterances, including many that are novel and unfamiliar. In other words languages have the unique characteristic called creativity or productivity. However when we talk

from the point of view of human beings, this ability is called **linguistics competence**. It is this linguistics competence, which constitutes the central subject matter of modern linguistics. In investigating linguistic competence, linguistics focus on the mental system which allows one to form and interpret the words and sentences of one's language. This system is also known as the "grammar" of that language.

Major components of this "grammar" are as follows:

Component	Responsibility
Phonetics	the articulation and perception of speech sounds
Phonology	the patterning of speech sounds
Morphology	the formation of words
Syntax	the formation of phrases and sentences
Semantics	the interpretation of words and sentences

The components are all inter-related and have been set up for doing linguistic analysis. These are often referred to as different levels of linguistic analysis. A brief definition of these levels given below.

Phonetics is the study of articulation, transmission and reception of speech sounds.

Phonology is the study of the organization of the units of the sounds of speech into syllables and other larger units. The phonology of a language is a description of the systems and patterns of sounds that occur in that language.

Morphology is the study of words.

Syntax deals with the combination of words into phrases, clauses and sentences.

Semantics is concerned with the study of meaning in all its aspects.

The traditional approach of linguistics

Buddha once said that life is always in a state of flux. By analogy therefore everything in life is in a state of flux, be it the value of the rupee, or the trends in fashion, or the changes brought in in sciences by new discoveries and innovations. If you have given this phenomenon some thought, you would have noticed that generally these changes are brought in because of a reaction against the existing state of affairs or because of new discoveries and innovations. Linguistics as a discipline is no exception to this phenomenon. In the rest of the unit, I shall, in brief, tell you about the changes that have been brought in within linguistics. Broadly speaking we can divide the development of linguistics into three phases: the traditional, the structural and the cognitive. In this section we shall trace the origins of linguistics- often referred to as the traditional approach to linguistics.

Historical records tell us that language has been an object of fascination and a subject of serious inquiry for over 2000 years. In fact, Panini and his near contemporary Plato were first to give us a reasonably complete grammar: Panini gave us a grammar of Sanskrit, and Plato of Greek. Later, it has been recorded, scholars like Aristotle, Dionysius Thrax and Protagoras investigated aspects of grammar, vocabulary and pronunciation in a detailed and organized way. The Greeks were primarily interested in the written form of a language. And they thought that only the language of the great writers was "pure" and "correct" and any deviation from it was seen as a corrupt and decayed form of language. Later when the Latin grammarians came, they simply followed the Greek model for the description of Latin. In fact, they thought that the Greek model could be used for the description of any language. What we said above was more or less true of the Indian grammatical tradition also. Panini and the later grammarians who followed in his footsteps primarily focused on the written form of Sanskrit; and later, Sanskrit grammar was used as a model for describing any other languages of the Indian subcontinent.

Scholars during this period took meaning into account while describing grammatical categories; and they seemed to believe that syntax i.e. the words are put together in sentences, followed "logically" from meaning.

The traditionalists were also interested in language as a tool for analyzing reality. They believed that the structure of language was a product of reason. Linguistics was thus looked upon as subordinate to logic and philosophy. And the linguistic description of language was prescriptive in nature. That is, they told people what they ought to use, following the great writers of that time, instead of describing what people actually use. This type of understanding and investigation of language continued until about the end of the 19th century.

The discovery of Sanskrit by western scholars like Leibniz and Sir William Jones was a major factor in the development of linguistics during the 19th century. Sir William Jones was struck by the similarity that Sanskrit bore to Greek and Latin. Researchers during this period started systematically comparing different languages and tracing them to a common origin. This way of analyzing languages

came to be known as Comparative philology. The Contribution of comparative philology to the development of linguistic science lay in the following: it established a methodology for setting up language families, it developed a general theory of linguistic change and linguistic relationship and it started focusing on the observation of facts of language instead of speculation. This was the first step towards turning linguistics into a scientific discipline.

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