

## 1) Linguistic as a Science.

- like science, it has a well <sup>defined</sup> subject-matter.
- as inductive as science could be and is based on observations
- scientific approach and methodology.
- Based on observations, formation of hypothesis, testing, verification, falsifiability and predictiveness.
- Uses instruments as oscillograph, sound spectrograph, kymograph, chronograph.
- language laboratory is used.
- A linguist too, develops hypothesis, makes generalized statements and tests.
- a linguist too predicts about unobserved linguistic data and builds a general theory to be explained.
- like other scientific disciplines, it is not static.
- It has closeness with other natural sciences like mathematics, physics, physiology, biology, zoology etc.
- It touches on physics through acoustics, on physiology through the structure of the human vocal organs, on zoology through the comparative study of the communicative systems of living beings.
- exhaustiveness, consistency, empirical science, empirical, objective, consistent, economical.

## Definitions at a Glance.

- Linguistics, Semiotics, Morphology, Phonology, Syntax, Phonetics
- Linguistics is the systematic study of the elements of language and the principles governing their combination and organization.
- Semantics:
- Phonology → the study of elementary speech sounds

## Characteristics of Language

- Language is a means of communication.
  - Language is arbitrary.
  - Language is a system of systems, because it operates at two levels
    - a) Phonological level → sounds of language appear in some fixed combinations
    - b) Syntactical level → words too combine to form sentences according to certain conventions (grammatical or structural levels).
- And so this property of language is also called duality.
- Language is primarily vocal → made up of vocal sounds produced by a physiological articulatory mechanism in the human body.
  - Language is a form of social behaviour (ie learnt in society)
  - Language is a symbol system.
  - Language is creative and productive.
  - Language has Interchangeability or reciprocity (Interchangeability was coined by C.F. Hockett).

Phonetics - physical description of speech sounds and how they are produced by vocal apparatus.

Semantics → Study of the meaning of words and of the combination of words in phrases, sentences and larger linguistic units

Semiotics → systematic study of signs.

## PROPERTIES OF HUMAN LANGUAGE.

- Language is "species-specific" and species-uniform possession of man.
- Language is sound, verbal and vocal.
- Language is a means of communication.
- Language is a social phenomenon, social institution.
- Language is non-instinctive conventional.
- Language is arbitrary: No inherent relation or logical relation or similarity exists between any given feature of language and its meaning. Language has no uniformity.
- Language is symbolic: it is a system of arbitrary vocal symbols.
- Language is systematic: All languages have phenomenal phonological and grammatical systems and sub-systems.
- Language is unique, creative, complex and modifiable.
- Language is both linguistic and communicative competence.
- Language is human and structurally complex.

### Human Language:

### Animal Language:

- |                                 |                                |
|---------------------------------|--------------------------------|
| 1) unlimited & infinite         | limited & finite               |
| 2) open system                  | closed system                  |
| 3) extendable, modifiable       | Not extendable or modifiable.  |
| 4) flexible & full of variety   | inflexible & no variety        |
| 5) non-instinctive              | instinctive                    |
| 6) acquired                     | inherited                      |
| 7) conditioned by Geography     | No                             |
| 8) full of novelty & creativity | No                             |
| 9) recurrent                    | repetition                     |
| 10) grammar                     | No grammar.                    |
| 11) cognitive + behavioural     | behavioural only               |
| 12) descriptive & narrative     | Non-descriptive & no narrative |

- Linguistics is the study (scientific) of language.
- Language is a form of mass social behaviour.
- J.R. Firth called language polysystematic because it is a system that contains various other systems: phonological, morphological, syntactic, semantic.
- The raw material of language is sound. Any language used anywhere is first a spoken language. Writing systems are the inventions of the latter stage in cultural evolution.
- Linguists consider spoken language as primary and written language as secondary.
- Sound, form and meaning are the three components of language as a system of communication.
- Sound is linear - Each sound unit represented by a symbol is followed by other symbols. The linearity of the symbols is a salient feature of language.
- Language has to be systematic.
- Charles F. Hockett identified the following 8 features of a language
  - a) Duality: The language that human beings use consists of two sub-systems - sound and meaning. Animal calls do not show such duality, they are unitary.
  - b) Productivity:
  - c) Arbitrariness:
  - d) Inter-changeability:
  - e) Displacement (MIB) (RAMA BROTHERS)
  - f) Cultural Transmission
  - g) Non-Verbal Human Communication:
    - h) Kinesics: The bodily movements appear to constitute a full-scale grammar of kinesics. This branch of paraling-

istics studies the communicational role of various bodily movements in relation to the linguistic segments. These are cultural specific.

h) Proxemics: This is the study of the use of the inter-personal distance for conveying meaning. This is also called social space.

i) Pauses.

j) Non-verbal Vocal Communication.