

राष्ट्रीय-अन्तरराष्ट्रीय ज्ञानार्जन का सेतु : मातृभाषा

संपादिका

डॉ० विजया तोमर

प्राचार्या,

सी.एम.के. नेशनल पी.जी. गर्ल्स कॉलेज सिरसा (हरियाणा)

सह-संपादिका

डॉ० कामना कौशिक

विभागाध्यक्ष हिन्दी

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अनु बुक्स
दिल्ली मेरठ

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68. Advertising and Language the Power of Words
Rama Sarraf 289
69. The Role of Language in Shaping Media Cultures
Dr. Timsy Mehta 298
70. The Sociocultural Interface Between Multilingualism and Globalization
Dr Pallavi Saxena 301
71. Current position of Hindi language in Indian business
Sunil Kumar 308
72. Role of Language in Chemistry
Kiran Bala 317
73. Importance of Nomenclature of Organic Compounds
Kiran Bala 324
74. Linguistics : Definition of Language and its Characteristic Features.
Dr. Kavita Sharma, Dr. Rajeev Kumar 331
75. Role of Language in Personality Development OR
Vaykatitav Ke Vikas Mein Bhasha ka Yogdan
Ms. ParveenKamboj 336
76. Importance of Mother Tongue for Emerging Swadeshi Movement
in Modern India.
Dr. Sharmila 340
77. The Revival of Punjabi Cinema in 21st Century
Dr. Sewa Singh Bajwa 354
78. National Language : A Vibrant Force for National Identity
Dr. Poonam Wadhwa 363

Linguistics

Definition of Language and its Characteristic Features.

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Language is a unique possession of man. It comes naturally to everybody so having a language, except, of course, a few cases, here and there, of people with mental relaxation to the extent of the impairment of nervous system and the speech organs, as in case of deaf and dumb.

It is language alone that has distinguished the human species from the animals. Language is, therefore species-specific and is also species uniform.

Language is abstraction makes no difference between this or that variety of language, called a language. So when we talking about language in general. But the moment we call it a language, we immediately mean a particular code, a particular set of conventions which we operate through the possession of the faculty of speech. A language is not held in common by all human beings but only by there who belong to a specific speech community.

Language is an arbitrary convention of a social group of people for means of communication. Let us now discuss these and other characteristic of language.

1. Language A Verbal, Vocal Sound :-

Language is organised vocal sounds using verbal elements as words and phrases. These are even now languages in world only in spoken verbal form no writing system.

2. Language A Means Of Communication :-

Language exists in society enabling of all the means of communication available to man, language is the most powerful means of communication such as gestures, signals, signs, flags, emblems etc. cannot match upto its effectiveness. Human beings through language express the whole gamut of their feelings, emotions and thought in a manner not otherwise possible.

3. **Language a Social Phenomenon :-**

Language exists in society enabling its members to communicate through conventionally accepted sound symbols. It relates all members together and binds them in a distinct social groups. In a society language is used to interact and co-operate with one another. It is through language that a society develops its culture and established its conventions, beliefs and values. In fact, language gives society a distinct identity.

4. **Language As Non-Instinctive And Conventional :-**

Language is a gift of evolution and convention. Nobody can learn it overnight. One has to evolve and acquire it. One does not get it in heritage. It is also not instinctive unlike our feelings, emotions and aspects of our behaviour everybody has an innate (inborn) ability to acquire language which has to be exercised.

5. **Language Is An Arbitrary :-**

Language is arbitrary in the sense of that there is no logic or reason in associating meanings with word. There is no reason why a particular word means a particular thing or idea and not any other. There is, infact no relationship between words and meanings. The same thing or object has different phonological identity in different languages and those is no logic why it is so names of things bear no logical relationship with the things and this is what arbitrariness is. Why things are called what they are called is merely an accident of linguistic history whose causes cannot be understood and explained. Through there are echo words in every language which imitate the sounds they represent their number is so very small that these cannot account for any plausible reason. For example the English words 'buzz', 'run and bang' represent their sound. So words and meaning in every language have been paired in a highly arbitrary manner.

Language Is Symbolic :-

Every language is represented by certain symbols which shared for particular sounds. But why a particular symbol stands for a particular sound is again arbitrary which cannot be explained, both the phonological and morphological identity of words is arbitrary.

7. **Language Is Systematic :-**

Language is a highly systematically arranged phenomenon. Out an infinite number of sounds every language chooses for itself a finite set of sounds which it arranges in its phonological and grammatical

systems. For examples within the grammatical system we have morphological and syntactical systems, which in their turn have further systems as those of gender, number, mood, aspect etc. In every language there is also a system of combining sounds with one another. For example, in English there is a system of combining such sounds as 'br' 'sp' 'pb' but not a system of combining 'bt' 'sb', 'pc' etc. in the beginning of a word. That is why language has been called system of systems.

Language Is Unique, Creative, Productive :-

Language is unique to the human world and earth. It means that only human beings possess it and only the earth has language spoken on its surface. There is no known example of an animal speaking language and its being by a human generation on any other planet.

Language is creative and productive in the sense that by using its structural elements new sentences and utterances can be produced.

Language, A Competence :-

Language is human competence in particular situations. In these situations, man is required both to understand what others say and to say what he himself wants to say. In understanding others, he has to show his linguistic competence and in expressing himself he has to combine with his linguistic competence his communicative competence also.

The first major application of linguistics is in the field of teaching and learning. One cannot teach a language without first knowing about it knowing a language is one thing but knowing about a language is yet another. Being able to speak a language fluently is no guarantee that one is able to present it to other for learning.

A teacher untrained in linguistics may present wrong facts about a language e.g. even today teachers of English teach tenses of English, whereas, modern linguistics has proved that English has only two tenses - present and past. Proper training in linguistics keeps him aware of the recent research in linguistics. It also enables him to grade the fact of language properly before teaching them.

A trained teacher can prepare his own teaching material based on meaningful situations or he can modify the available teaching books according to the situations in which the pupil lives. A linguistically trained teacher always bears in mind the differences between the pupil's mother tongue and the language being taught to him. He can mark the areas of

difficulty and suggest remedies too. Trained teachers of language are such sought after around the world. Teaching English only is a major industry in the world. English is a major language of international communication. It is the most widely learnt second language.

Another application of linguistics is in the field of translation of computers only a linguistic programme a computer by feeding the structure of the two language it is dealing with.

Tele Communication is another field where a linguist can be very useful. Phonetics is very important in telephone communication. By excluding the unessential features of speech a phonetician, can improve and speed up communication besides saving money.

Acoustic phonetics can be useful in the production of visual deaf and dumb aid. It is a spectrograph which converts speech sounds into pictures which the deaf can be easily taught to read.

Now scientists are trying to develop robots who can answer questions. But before this the robot has to be fed with an immense amount linguistic information and this job cannot be done without the help of a linguist.

Speech Pathology is another area where linguistics plays a very important role. There may be a language disorder of phonetics, phonological or grammatical nature or some combination of these. And if the disorder is of grammatical nature, then which aspect of grammar is affected and how deeply? Before a therapist begins his treatment he will have to seek the advice of a linguist to know what the language deficiency is and how far it is removed from normality. For example, if a four-year child suffers from language disorder, a linguist as an expert in child-speech can tell the therapist what the normal speech patterns of a four-year-old are. He can give him important information about the linguistic state the patient should achieve.

Language studies make one a specialist in modern languages. Such a language specialist has job opportunities in fields like foreign service, UNO and other international organisations, international relation tourism, diplomacy, multinationals civil aviation, commerce, banking, advertising, mass-media, journalists etc.

Communication is the only function of language. It is two types written or oral. Human needs keep on changing, the needs of communication also change. Language is open ended phenomenon.

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also changes, expands itself to cope with the changing needs of communication. It used boldly it can be a barrier to communication. The problem of self-expression and intelligibility are universal. Whether it is a question of relations between two individuals or two nations, the choice of appropriate words matters much so we cannot fake language casually. We can use it better only if we understand its complex structure and that is what language studies do.

