

# **Communication and Language**

## **Chapter 4**

# Linguistics

- ...the scientific study of language.
- **Language:**
- ...a system of symbols with standard meanings through which members of a society communicate with one another.
- ...a system of communication using sounds or gesture that are put together in meaningful ways according to a set of rules.

# Features of Human Language

- **Productivity:**
  - ...an open system of communication.
- **Displacement:**
  - ...the capacity to convey information about things or an event that is not present.  
(Hypothetical, past, future)

# Features of Human Language

- **Arbitrariness:**
- ...no inherent connection, just social agreement. “Symbols- language is a system of communication in symbols.”

# Anthropological Linguist

- **Phonology** - Study of the sounds of the language.
- **Morphology** - Study of the words of a language.
- **Syntax** - Study of the sentence structure.
- **Semantics** - Study of the meaning of the language.

# Phonology

- ...the study of sounds of a language.
- **Phoneme-**
- ...is a unit of sound that distinguishes meaning in a particular language.
- ...the minimal units of sound that signal a difference in meaning.

# Phonology

- **Duality of Patterning:**
- ...same sounds, (phonemes), can be combined and recombined to form different meanings.
- Minimal-pair Test –
- ...the linguist tries to find short words that appear to be exactly alike except for one sound.

# Phonology- Cont'd

- Minimal Pairs -
- ..words that resemble one another but contain one distinctive sound difference.
- Dime      Time      Den      Ten
- Rat      Bat      Day      Pay
- This minimal pair difference between “1st” letter, represent a contrast in meaning or “Phonemic Difference.”

# Duality of Patterning: Cont'd

- How many phonemes are there in the English language?
- Nonhuman animals cannot combine their sound units to communicate new meanings; one vocalization is given to indicate a specific response.

# Morphology

- ...is the study of meaningful set of sounds in a language.
- Morphemes - (Morphy) ...the smallest units of a language that convey meaning.
- Prefixes-
- Roots-
- Suffixes-

# Morphology

- Prefixes –
- **In...**
- Indecisive, inexperience, indefinite...
- **Un...**
- Unclear, unwise, unmotivated...
- **A...**
- Amoral, atypical, asymmetrical...

# Morphology

- Suffixes-
- Rat (s)
- Artists
- Art – Root word
- Artist – (ist)
- Artists – (ist) (s)
- Musicians, players, thinkers

# Syntax

- ...the principles guiding how words are arranged into phrases and sentences. (The order of words)
- Example- The boy (subject)  
drank (verb)  
the water (object)

# Origins of Language

- Discrete languages:
- Reasonable estimate of approximately 6,000
- 95% of world population speak only 100 of the 6,000 languages.
- 20% of world population speak Mandarin
- 45% speak English, Hindi, Spanish & Russian
- The rest speak thousands of discrete lang.

# Historical Linguistics

- The study of how languages change over time.
- Process:
- The study of contemporary *Daughter Languages*.
- *Protolanguage* is the original language from which the daughter languages diverge.

# Sociolinguistics

- Ethnography of speaking -
- ...concerned with cultural and subcultural patterns of speech variation in different social contexts.
- ...concentration on variations in language use depending on the social situation or context in which the speaker is operating.

# Sociolinguistics

- *Code Switching* -
- ...using more than one language in the course of conversing.
- *Diglossia* -
- ...the situation in which two forms of the same language are spoken by people in the same language community depending on the social situation.