

AN INTRODUCTION TO LANGUAGE AND LINGUISTICS IN MODERN PERSPECTIVE



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Abstract

This presentation source/paper deals with Key-Concepts of Introduction to Linguistics writing with special reference to Noam Chomsky: Syntactic Structures, Leonard Bloomfield: Language, and Structural Linguistics and Ferdinand Saussure: 'A Course in General Linguistics' (1915). They are an attempt to develop the extra-textual fabric of socio-linguistic study. The first part of this paper mainly focuses on the basic concepts of language, English as a Global language, Window to Science, & Technology, English as a link language, Linguistics, Linguistics as a Science, Scope, and Modern Linguistics as a whole. It is also discusses the rejection of Linguistic materialism by Language thinkers like Noam Chomsky, Bloom Field and Ferdinand Saussure. The second part shall process of adding the finding.

Key words: language, linguistics, linguistic perspective

Introduction

Language is an essential part of in human life. Language is primarily an instrument of communication among human being in a communication. It is more than the apparently simple stream of sound that flow from the tongue of the speaker. The world is talking and sharing more. English is our 'window to the world' we live in an age of *Information Technology*.

Allen- has given certain definitions of language in his book as follows:

"Language is a means of communicating thoughts".



“Language is a means of social control”.

“Language is a social activity rather than as a means of individual self-expression”.

English is the reflection of the aspirations, endeavors, local history, and experience of diverse cultures. English is a beautiful and highly expressive language with many forms.

In this way I would like to share some amazing, phenomenon and wondering thoughts about English language- these are: In English language there are totally-7,90,000 words. In this manner 4,90,000 words are used in the field of non-technical, but 3,00,000 words are relating to technical field. These words not only originated in English language, thus it taken borrowed many words from mainly 350 languages. Most of the words are derived from Greek and Latin languages.

A well-educated English citizen approximately he may use English words throughout his life 16,000 to 18,000 words only. A distinguished philosopher and famous educationist may used 36,000 to 38,000 words throughout his life.

THE STATUS OF ENGLISH IN THE WORLD TODAY

Spread of English in the contemporary world. According to the noteworthy linguists ‘**Braj Kachru**’ had divided three circle of English family, these are below:

- The Inner Circle: The traditional bases of English where it is used as first language in countries like- United Kingdom, United States of America, Australia and New Zealand etc. Approximately 320 to 380 million people are using English as first language.
- The Outer Circle: The earlier phases of the spread of English where the language is used as an important second language. Using countries like- India, Singapore, Bangladesh and other countries. Probably more than 350 million people are using as a second language.
- The Expanding Circle: Areas where English is recognized as an important language for the trade or international communication and taught as a foreign language/ third language. In this circle many countries using English as a foreign/ third language. For example-China, Russia and many more countries.



In ratio of this circle 100 to 1000 million people are using English as a foreign/ third language in the contemporary world.

EMERGENCE OF ENGLISH AS A GLOBAL LANGUAGE:

English language spread rapidly all over the world. About 80% of the Internet Source available in English language, for this reason English is considered as the international of foreign language. In this manner some recognizable points are helping to global language:

- English is now the language of opportunity and empowerment.
- English is on its way to becoming the lingua franca (way of communicating which is used between people who do not speak one another's native language).
- English is the medium of a great deal of the world's knowledge, especially in such areas as science and technology.
- A person is more likely to be touch with the latest thinking and research in a subject by learning English than any other language.
- About the quarter of the world's population is already fluent or competent in English and this figure is steadily growing.
- English in now so widely established in the world.
- Now English as a new, functional role, no longer associated with the political authority it once held.
- English is essential for progress as it will provide the main means of access to high-tech communication and information over the next twenty five years.
- It is likely to remain the world's language for international communication.
- Three-quarter of the world's mail in English.
- About 80% of the world's electronically stored information is in currently in English.

English provides a chance to develop in any field of one's choice. It helps one to grow. It does not confine a citizen to his or her own nation. It opens the possibilities to be global in the real sense. A great philosopher and thinker *Aristotle* says: - "*Speech is the representation of the experience of the mind*". And also *Noam Chomsky* says: - "*When we study human language, we are approaching what some might call "human essence", the*



distinctive qualities of mind that are, so far as we know, unique to man”.

ENGLISH AS A GLOBAL LANGUAGE

English is one of the International and remarkable languages among the World's languages, which has significant position in the world. The vast expansion of English cultural and commercial influence in many parts of the world, which has suggested too many that English might well become the international auxiliary language of the world.

English is a mother tongue in England, America, Canada Australia, New Zealand and South Africa, and spoken by 300 million peoples, and in India and France have used second language of administration, education and many stage.

There are five main aspects are make to English as the 'World Language'. These following aspects are:

- the geographical spread of English language.
- the number of speakers, learners of this language.
- the volume of information, knowledge produced and shared in this language.
- the special status for the official language as well as foreign language.
- the number of fields, areas and domains are deals in English language.

It is interesting to note that English speakers and nations which were once colonized by this language are not just passively absorbing the language; they are activity reshaping and remaking it.

ENGLISH AS WINDOW TO SCIENCE AND TECHNOLOGY

It is considered as the widow of the world language. English is the leading language of a whole lot of Science and technology. It is spread through communication, and, impact on the science and technology, with the exposition of knowledge a vast amount of scientific and technological know, how has come out in the form of books, advertisements, scientific journals, journals, books, peace processes, science consumerism, technical reviews, periodical, newspapers, aviation, conference, social movements, technology, diplomacy,



sport, music, and Manuals, which are mostly available in English language. Many universities have shifted to the regional languages as their medium of intrusion.

Almost 80 per cent of the online stored information is in English. More than 70 per cent of the world conferences in the fields of science and technology are conducted in English. It is a major medium of education too. It offers us treasures of knowledge in all social science like economics, sociology, history, political science and many more. Till date, no other language has been able to match this growth.

ENGLISH AS A LINK LANGUAGE

Another significant element, is English is link language and in its service between different state language, people through the medium of English carry out their trade, commerce, business relations day to day state matters, national policies, discussions and similar of her activities of common interest in the absence of a common link language, for all practical purpose. It is not possible English comes as a helping hand-maid in such situations. Thus, English language serves as a link amount the several of the country.

Linguistics is defined as the scientific study of language. By scientific is meant investigating language by means of controlled and empirically verifiable observation and with reference some general theory of language structure. The term scientific is in the context of language study probably confuse the beginner who is not able to find anything in common with language study and the study of the natural and physical sciences. It is scientific because it follows the general methodology of science (controlled observation, hypothesis-formation, analysis, generalization, and prediction, testing by further observation, and confirmation, modification or rejection of the hypothesis). OR

Linguistics is the scientific study of language, encompassing a number of subfields.

Before going to study of these sub-fields of language we should know about this common thing.



- Those who know about only one language person called as- Monolingual.
 - Those who know about two languages that person called as- Bi-Lingual.
 - Those who know about more than two languages that person called as- Multi-Lingual.
 - Those who know about more than fifteen languages that person called as- Polyglot.
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- Language is a symbolic system and linguistic symbols are arbitrary, vocal symbols.
 - Linguistics has two major aims: to study the nature of language and establish a theory of language and to describe a language and all languages by applying the theory established.

MODERN LINGUISTICS

A study of modern linguistics begins with the name of Ferdinand de Saussure, the Swiss linguist who introduced a totally new concept of language study. Saussure took the language study circle by storm with his structuralistic notion of language. For Saussure, language is a structure in its own way and there are certain fundamental principles under which language works, Saussure's notions of language were popularized posthumously by his students at the Geneva University. His lecture notes come to be published by the students after his death, in the year of 1915 titled as '*Course de Linguistique Generale*' (A Course in General Linguistics). Ferdinand de Saussure is usually referred to as the father of modern linguistics and the publication of his '*A Course in General linguistics*' (1915) the starting point of modern linguistics.

- De Saussure's major contribution to linguistics is the notion that language is a "system of system".
- By 'structure of language' we mean the interrelations of linguistic units in a language, whether sounds, words or meanings.
- The way in which the individual elements of a particular language are related



determiners the structure of a particular language.

- Distinction between the two approaches to the study of language: the synchronic (or descriptive) approach and the diachronic (or historical) approach.
- Distinction between signifier and signify.
- The set of principles that language is a system of systems.
- Distinction between *langue* and *parole*, Parole is the concrete manifestation of language and langue is the abstract knowledge for producing instances of parole.
- Thus, the structuralism diction that a language should be described in its own terms and not in terms of universal categories can be traced back Saussure.

Noam Chomsky: was born on December 7, 1928, is an American linguist philosopher. And he is more influential linguist of 20th century. Sometimes Chomsky described as the 'father of modern linguistics'. He was a tutor at Massachusetts Institution of Technology. The basis of Chomsky's linguistic theory is that the principles underlying the structure of language are biologically determined in the human mind and hence genetically transmitted. He therefore argues that all humans share the same underlying linguistic structure, irrespective socio-cultural differences.

Chomskyan linguistics, beginning with his '*Syntactic structure*' (1957) a distillation of his 'Logical Structure of Linguistic Theory (1955, 75), challenges structural linguistics and introduced transformational grammar. The '*Syntactic structure*' contains the famous sentence, '*Colourless green ideas sleep furiously*', which Chomsky offered as an example of a sentence that is completely grammatical, yet also completely nonsensical.

Leonard Bloomfield: is the most influential linguist after Boas. He made Linguistics autonomous and scientific discipline. As Bloomfield understood the term scientific, it implied a rejection of all data that was not directly observable or physically measurable. Hence meaning was banished from Linguistics altogether. Under the influence of Behaviorist psychology, Bloomfield viewed language as a human behavior and explained it in terms of stimulus and response. The publication of Leonard Bloomfield's *Language*



(1930) was another turning point in the history of linguistics. The followers of Bloomfield developed his theories and techniques to formulate what is known as *Structural Linguistics*.

CONCLUSION:

The relationship between language and Linguistics of the present destination is a very important. Language plays a great part in our life. And English language as acclaimed an international status. In our country, where several languages are in vogue, English has acquired the top position. Today English is the medium of all modern technologies. English language is also not left untouched with this phenomenon. And linguistic globalizing is leaving its mark on almost every sphere of life.

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