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GENERAL PRINCIPLES OF LINGUISTICS

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Abstract: This article provides general information about linguistics, examining its fundamental characteristics and various branches. Questions such as "What kind of science is linguistics?", "When and where did it originate?", and "Who were the pioneers of this field?" naturally arise for everyone. This article discusses and provides answers to these inquiries. The study contains valuable insights for both linguistic scholars and language learners.

Keywords: origin of linguistics, branches of linguistics, scholarly views and theories, problems of linguistic science, connection between thought and speech, differences between language and parole (speech).

Abstract Linguistics is a social science that studies the origin of language, its fundamental issues, general laws of development, and various linguistic descriptions and theories. Language is an essential tool for human communication and a primary factor in social formation. Its evolution is inextricably linked to society, as language serves as the foundational medium for all other fields of study.

Historical Development The study of linguistics originated in ancient India. Before the 6th century BC, Indian linguistics emerged through Vedic interpretations of language from various perspectives. It flourished further in the 5th–4th centuries BC due to Panini's grammar. This seminal work, consisting of 3,996 linguistic rules, described Sanskrit phonetics and grammar. Furthermore, the linguistic views of Heraclitus and Democritus were explored regarding grammatical structure. The categorization of words into parts of speech began with Aristotle in the 4th century BC. He classified words based on their function in a sentence into three categories: nouns, verbs, and conjunctions.

The Modern Era and Saussure's Theory The 20th century marked a new era in defining linguistics. In 1916, the Swiss scholar Ferdinand de Saussure (1857–1913) redefined the subject of linguistics in his theory. Identifying language as a complex phenomenon, he established a sophisticated and precise linguistic theory. Saussure defined language through three lenses:

- **Functionally:** A tool for communication and a means of expressing thought within society.
- **Socially:** A cultural, social, and historical phenomenon.
- **Structurally:** A pure system of signs and symbols.

If a society ceases to use its language, it becomes a dead language. Languages are categorized into two types: **dead languages** (those no longer used in daily communication) and **living languages** (those currently used by a people or community and passed down through generations).

Branches and Laws of Linguistics Linguistics is divided into general, specific, applied, and theoretical branches:

1. **General Linguistics:** Studies language as a universal human phenomenon, identifying features common to all world languages.
2. **Specific Linguistics:** Focuses on the characteristics of a particular language.
3. **Theoretical Linguistics:** Examines the internal laws, structure, and grammar of language. Its core principles include:

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- **Phonology and Phonetics:** Phonology studies the function of sounds within a specific language, while phonetics studies the physical production of sounds common to all languages.

- **Morphology:** Studies word structure and formation.

- **Syntax:** Studies sentence structure and word combinations.

- **Semantics:** Analyzes the underlying meaning and context of sentences.

4. **Applied Linguistics:** Focuses on the practical application of theoretical knowledge. This includes fields such as linguodidactics, translation studies, and computational linguistics.

Language and Speech Language (*langue*) and speech (*parole*) are distinct yet complementary:

- Language is socially constructed; speech is manifested in individual activity.

- Language is long-lasting and tied to social life; speech is ephemeral, existing only at the moment of utterance.

- An individual can possess multiple languages simultaneously; however, at the moment of speaking, speech is singular as it occurs in one language at a time. Despite these differences, they fulfill each other. Modern linguistics identifies three components of linguistic activity:

Language, Faculty of Speech, and Speech.

Linguistic Challenges, Thought, and Conclusion The primary challenge in linguistics is the study of internal structure. The multifaceted relationship between phonetics, grammar, and vocabulary forms a complex system. Today, the violation of linguistic norms on social media leads to orthographic illiteracy.

Language and thought are interconnected. While language is a tool for expression, thought is the mental generalization of reality and its connections. Thought is a function of the human brain, based on the interaction of primary and secondary signal systems. We define our intent, filter it through our consciousness, and express it through speech. This underscores the inseparable bond between thought and language.

Linguistics is not just a social phenomenon but a complex biological and psychological system that drives human development. Multilingualism enriches our worldview and spiritual growth. Studying linguistic laws refines our speech, clarifies our national identity, and sharpens our intellect.

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