

SOME FUNDAMENTAL CONCEPTS AND DISTINCTIONS IN LINGUISTICS

Unit - IV

Background

→ Modern linguistics is based on some fundamental concepts which were expounded by linguists in the beginning of the twentieth century.

- * Leonard Bloomfield
- * Noam Chomsky
- * Ferdinand de Saussure.

The language/Parole distinction

Saussure made a distinction between two aspects of language;

→ Langue and Parole

→ Langue means language, that is all the

rules and conventions regarding the combinations of sounds, formation of words and sentences, pronunciation and meaning.

Language

→ If we embrace the sum of word images stored in the mind of all individuals we could identify the social bond that constitutes language.

→ language is Social, a set of conventions shared by all the speakers of a language.

→ language is abstract, as these particular conventions exist in the mind of the speakers who belong to that society that has created the language.

Parole

→ Parole, on the other hand, belongs to the individual. When those conventions that exist in the mind as language are used in a concrete form in actual speech or writing, they become instances of parole. Parole is the actual sounds and sentences produced by an individual speaker or writer.

→ Individual performance of language in speech or writing.

→ Concrete and physical, it makes use of the physiological mechanism such as speech organs, in uttering words and sentences.

Competence

→ Competence according to Chomsky is the native speaker's knowledge of his language, the mastery of the system of rules. Competence is a set of principles which a speaker masters. Competence is free from interference due to slips of memory, lapses of attention, etc.,

Performance

→ Performance is the production of actual sentences in use in real-life situations, so a speaker's knowledge of the structure of the language is the speaker's linguistic competence and the way in which he uses it is linguistic performance. Performance is what speakers do. Performance reflects many such lapses.


The Nature of the Linguistic Sign And Sign

→ The language system is made up of signs. In fact, as Saussure says, sign is the central fact of language.

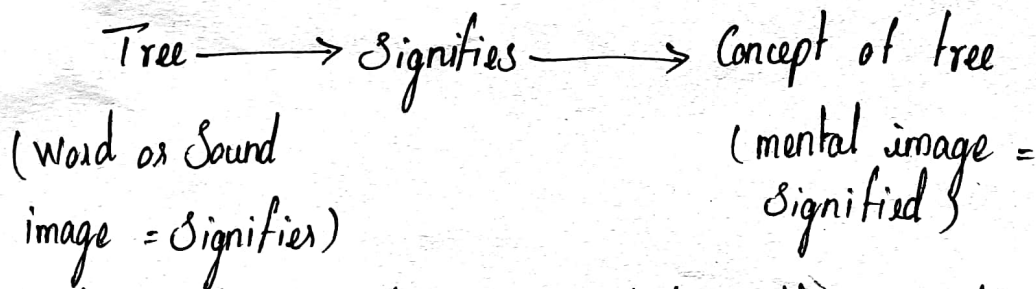
→ A sign is a physical marker which carries some information. The information it gives is

direct, brief and Precise meaning only this, no other).
it Contains more information and stands in place of
Something as a means of Pointing towards it indirectly.

→ The linguistic Sign consists of two Parts.
The Signifier and the Signified as the word which Signifies
and the object that is Signified as:

Tree Signifies 

→ Let us therefore modify the earlier diagram regarding
Sign in the following manner:



That which Signifies (the 'Word') is the Signifier. That which
is Signified the Concept is the Signified. Sign is the
composite of both. it consists of the relationship between
the Signifier and the Signified. This relationship, once
established, continues over a long Period of time. it is
established as a Social fact.,

→ A Symbol is a kind of Sign that Signifies
Several Concepts on the basis of the Primary
relationship between Signifier and signified.