

Chapter One: Preliminaries of Linguistics

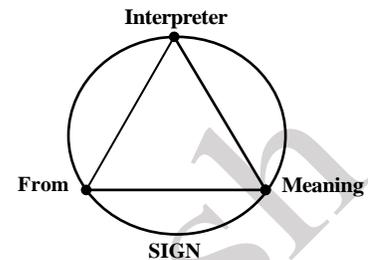
1. SIGN

Sign → an intersection or relationship of form and meaning

Saussure offered a dyadic or two-part model:

- 'signifier' (signifiant)
- 'signified' (signifié)

Components of sign:



2. THREE TYPES OF SIGNS

Icon → a sign whose form has actual characteristics of its meanings

Index → a sign whose form has characteristics which are only associated in nature with its meaning

Symbol → a sign whose form is arbitrarily or conventionally associated with its meaning

3. LINGUISTIC SIGNS

3.1. Evidence for the symbolic nature of linguistic signs

- Translation equivalents
- Synonyms
- Iconically expressible meanings

3.2. An exception to the symbolic nature of linguistic signs

- Sound symbolism → words whose pronunciation suggests the meaning
 - *Mimetic = Onomatopoeic words* sound like what they mean
 - To draw out the pronunciation of words

4. LINGUISTIC COMPETENCE vs. LINGUISTIC PERFORMANCE

Linguistic competence → the unconscious knowledge about sounds, meanings, and syntax possessed by the speakers of a language

Linguistic performance → the actual use of linguistic competence in the production and comprehension of language

5. THREE SUBSTRUCTURES OF LANGUAGE/ LINGUISTIC COMPETENCE

5.1. Knowledge of the Sound System

Knowing what sounds are in a language and what sounds are not → **Phonetics**

Knowing the way speech sounds form patterns → **Phonology**

5.2. Knowledge of Words

Knowing certain strings of sounds stand for certain meanings → **Semantics**

Knowing the smallest meaningful units of language, the internal structure of words, and the rules by which words are formed → **Morphology**

5.3. Knowledge of Sentences and Non-Sentences

Concerns the combinations of words as phrases and of phrases as sentence → **Syntax**

6. DESCRIPTIVE vs. PRESCRIPTIVE APPROACH

Descriptive → a description of the underlying, mental linguistic competence of its speakers

Prescriptive → contain rules of what the language should be. These grammars attempt to change actual language use by prohibiting certain forms.

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