

Linguistics

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What Is Linguistics?

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Linguistics is the scientific study of human language. The study can be either theoretical or practical, and the person who studies language scientifically is called a **linguist**. Linguists apply scientific methods to conduct formal analyses of the world's 6000+ languages: making observations, testing hypotheses, and developing theories.

What Is Linguistics?

They are concerned with three main aspects of language: structure, meaning, and use.

1. **Structure** involves studying the sequence of linguistic units that have a relationship to one another.
2. **Meaning** involves studying the ideas that the linguistic units express.
3. **Use** involves studying the context in which the linguistic units are employed.

What Is Linguistics?

Modern linguists are interested in how language is organized in the mind and in the cognitive processes involved in its comprehension and production. They aim to describe how the language faculty of the mind works. They observe patterns within a language and try to find out what principles are responsible for their comprehension and production.

What Is Linguistics?

Linguistics should not be confused with **polyglotism**, the ability to speak many languages. **A linguist** is a person who studies language, he or she does not need to speak several languages, other than the one used to communicate with other linguists. Likewise, linguistics is a discipline distinct from **philology**, the study of the history of language including its origin and evolution.

What Is Linguistics?

Linguistics is the science of language, the synchronic study of language. It describes and explains linguistic phenomena empirically. Unlike **philology** (the scientific study of the development of language or of a particular language), linguistics identify generalizations that hold across all languages.

What Is Linguistics?

Further, linguistics is not concerned with **literary criticism**, the art or practice of judging and commenting on the quality and character of literary works. Linguists are not literary critics. Linguists describe the facts of utterances, not their aesthetic or moral value.

What Is Linguistics?

Finally, linguistics should not be equated with **grammar misconception**, the set of rules on how language should or should not be used. Linguistics is about a set of rules covering how language is actually used. In the description of a language, one must not impose findings specific to other languages, Latin for example. In linguistics, every language must be described in its own terms.

Why Study Linguistics

1. Studying linguistics contributes to the understanding of language. It can help one to understand various aspects of language and explore the ways in which language can be used to facilitate communication. One can gain an in-depth understanding of how language conveys meaning, and acquire skills to write, read, and speak with greater confidence.

Why Study Linguistics

2. Through linguistics, one can learn the grammar of a language. Coming to understand why one expression might be viewed as correct and another as incorrect could help one make choices about how one expresses ideas. Grammar helps one to improve the ability to articulate one's thoughts and ideas so that they can appeal to other people.

Why Study Linguistics

3. Linguistics is interdisciplinary. It draws on other fields such as psychology, sociology, or neurology to resolve linguistic issues that cannot be solved from a single perspective. Through interdisciplinary studies, one can discover the value of integrating the concepts of different disciplines, and learn creative solutions to challenging problems.

Why Study Linguistics

4. Linguistics has practical applications. It offers solutions to problems related to language pedagogy, speech therapy, and **language documentation***. Linguistic insights help in the teaching of first, second, and foreign languages, in the treatment of language disabilities, in the investigation of crime, and in the preservation of endangered languages.

*analyzing and documenting the grammatical rules, vocabulary, and phonetic structures of a language, linguists help preserve linguistic diversity.

Why Study Linguistics

5. Linguistics, the study of language based on large collections of real-life language data—corpora (represent how language is actually used in various contexts,). Another example is computational linguistics (like Google Translate), the application of computer science to the analysis, synthesis, and comprehension of written and spoken language.