

What is language

[Linguistics](#), [Language](#)



Describe the functions of language. (3) Explain the relevance/importance of English Language Studies. (4) use the knowledge gained to analyse a few texts. Candela et. Al. 2012: 1-2) By working through your tutorial matter (study guide and textbooks), you should be able to provide answers to these questions. What is language? Language is " the method of human communication, either spoken or written, consisting of the use of words in a structured and conventional way. " | What is communication? Communication is " the imparting or exchanging of information by speaking, writing, or using some other medium. " 2 In order to communicate (for people to understand one another) we need to use language in a structured manner. Consider the following sentences:) I am happy because I ate chocolate.) Chocolate I happy I because ate am. C) I ma yap succubae I tea teleological. 1 OFFS Why do you understand the first sentence? Why are the second and third sentences unintelligible? For meaningful communication to take place, we need to understand and apply the rules of the particular language we are studying. In this module, we learn about some of the rules which govern the English language. You will learn words, sentences and ideas that will help you to describe language. These words and ideas will be applied to real life situations where English is used.

Consider how English is used in different situations: school, work, home and Twitter. You will begin to appreciate that language use varies from one context to another. Ask yourself the question; would you talk or write to your employer in the same way that you would address your friends? You will be introduced to the technical language terminology (such as " syntax", " phonetics", " phonology", " register", " genre", " text", " semantics" and "

pragmatics") in order to study language. Since you do not generally use language in isolation, we need to investigate how it is used in society.

Remember that not everyone uses language in the same manner. For this reason, we need to learn varieties of language, dialects, standards, and attitudes to language. What is a text? If you refer to the dictionary, there are many definitions provided for "text". For example, a "text" could refer to "a book or other written or printed work, regarded in terms of its content rather than its physical form." ³ In your study guide, we learn that "text" does not refer exclusively to written material. By 'text' we mean any piece of writing/language that hangs together from the beginning to the end.

It has to have unity. Texts do not only have to be written. They can be spoken, e. G. The news that we hear on radio, or the news that we watch being broadcast on Television. A text can also be visual or audio-visual. Indeed, texts that are produced for television are audio-visual. Similarly, some written texts combine both the written and the visual, e. G. Newspaper reports. An art painting, such as, (Candela et. Al. , 2012: 3) Example of a text: Mona Lisa Leonardo da Vinci Why do you think a painting can be regarded as a text? Provide other examples of texts. What is a domain?

One definition for "domain" is "a specified sphere of activity or knowledge." ⁴ In your study guide, we learn that a "domain" does not refer exclusively to written Domain refers to social categories which locate all instances of language use in various situations or contexts. It can be the classroom domain, the sports field, a church, a political rally, etc. Notice that a classroom belongs to the larger sphere or domain of education, and a sermon

in church belongs to the larger domain of religion. (Candela et. Al. , 2012: 4)

Provide examples of a domain. Why is it important to identify a domain? ?

Earlier, I provided a dictionary definition of language. On page 4 of your study guide, there are other definitions of language. In this module, language is viewed as a system of relating forms to functions. What does this mean? Firstly, can you identify the constituents of a sentence? I. E. Can you identify a verb, adverb, noun, adjective and so forth? Sentence. If you can identify these forms and how they function in a sentence, then you will begin to understand how they produce meaning in a text. Language is like a machine. If any parts are missing or are in the wrong place, the machine will not work.

The following table from the study guide represents the language system:

Language concept	Meaning	Phonetics	The study of speech sounds.
Phonology	The study of the sound patterning system.	Lexis	The study of the actual words a writer or speaker chooses to use.
Morphology	The study of how words are formed.	Syntax	The study of how words combine to form sentences and the rules that govern the formations.
Orthography	Writing systems	Semantics	The study of meaning, how meaning is made and understood.
Pragmatics	The study of the use of language in communication - I. E. Sentences as used in contexts and situations.	Discourse	