

# Differences in the way language is used

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



Language is an important aspect of a human being. The capability to speak and use language makes it possible for an individual to relate to other people. However, language is not merely a means of communication; it is an essential factor that shows a person's thoughts as well as his or her culture. Being the case, since there are many various cultures in the world it is not surprising that there are many languages that exist. This kind of diversity is even more observable in the different ways language is used. Numerous articles have dwelt on the topic of language especially in its importance and the ways it is used.

The succeeding paragraphs will discuss the different usage of language based upon some of the written accounts that have given specific attention in this topic. These will deal with the various functions of language in different areas and its effects in society. American linguists and anthropologists perceived that language has a more important role aside from the fact that it shapes an individual's view of reality. This idea became widely known during the beginning of the 20th century especially in the first four decades.

The one responsible for this kind of thinking are Edward Sapir and his student Benjamin Whorf. They asserted that "language predetermines what we see in the world around us" (O'Neil, 2006, n. p. ). Simply put, language acts as a filtering mechanism wherein an individual could only see and understand the real world based upon the categories of their language. In the study of Sapir and Whorf, they conducted a cross-cultural comparison of color. A person perceived a particular color through the use of the eyes, which is aided by light.

The frequency of light is the one who stimulate the eye in order to recognize the lightness or darkness of a certain color. As such, the eye only see the value of a pigmentation whether they are high or low but the terms used in referring to it like red or green does not actually exist. As such, it is through the use of language that these different values of light are called with various names (O'Neil, 2006, n. p. ). The assumption of Sapir and Whorf that there are cultural differences in the perception of color is not recognized by other expert in the field by commenting that they went to far.

Experts said that all people in the world have the similar visual perception and this is not affected by culture. Nevertheless, the study that they conducted proves that language has an important role in how people perceived the different phenomena in their surrounding like the recognition of light. It is through language that people could specifically recognize these colors by name even if they have various terminologies on how it should be called. Language as a medium could also be used in order to change people's perceptions about things as well as make them adhere to new ideas and concepts.

A good example of such is through the media. Advertising has its way of using and playing with language that would make an ordinary consumer avail of the products and services that they are marketing. The famous taglines or one-liners that most commercials used leave a mark in the consciousness of the people that make them patronize what they are selling (Schrank, n. d. ). Moreover, even television programs or movies also have its way of changing the opinion of people about issues and other events.

The media could easily use words that could aggravate a certain event than what is really happening. Language also has a pivotal role in the world of business. The rapidly changing time has paved the way for business operations to become international in nature. This is exemplified by the existence of multinational corporations that operate in different countries and establish business relationships with people of various cultures. Good communication is one of the most important elements for a successful business and in order to do so, language has to be given due importance.

In an article written by Jim Brantley (2007), a teacher of Business English and a consultant that specializes in Cross Cultural Communications, he emphasizes the importance of effectively using language in business especially during this time of globalization. Brantley discusses that today's market is highly characterized by competition wherein there is a demand for diversity and the need to venture into labor markets that will sustain the nature of the business. Important factors like currency can be easily understood but dealing with people who are involved in business operations could be more challenging.

More so, if it deals with people of different nationality. The primary idea in addressing this issue is by teaching a standardized medium of communication through the English language. Key employees should know how to speak English in order for them to easily understand instructions as well as give their inputs in decision-making processes. However, it is not as simple as that because there should be a substantial process of teaching in order for the employees to effectively use the language. In this scenario, the importance of language is further highlighted.

Language is a pivotal tool in many aspects of operation in the society and it is clearly seen in the area of business. In a culturally diverse world where people come from different countries with various nationalities, language served as a means of identification. Most people would easily recognize the country of origin of a particular individual based upon the language that he or she uses. Even the mere accent that a person produce while speaking is a helpful indicator in recognizing his or her nationality.

Furthermore, the identity of a state is also exemplified through the language that a country is using. Almost every state has a country profile that contains the necessary vital information about that particular entity. Language is included among the facts that describe a certain country. As such, this only proves that language is essential in differentiating one country from another. Moreover, having this knowledge is also beneficial in dealing with its people. Diplomatic relations is widely practiced by most states.

In doing so, a state has to established relationships with other countries in order to facilitate cooperation and collaboration in various areas of interests. It could be in terms of economic concerns and social problems. Even the process of asking for aid in times of crisis or war becomes easier through good relationships. To be able to form an effective and meaningful diplomatic relationship, the representatives of each country have to give specific attention in learning the language of the other party they are dealing with (Edwards, 2004).

This is also the reason why most ambassadors are multi-lingual so that they could properly convey the message of their state with the international community. Geographical locations and boundaries are also another reason

to the different uses of language. The territorial location of a particular country is often the reason as to why particular words are formed. This is exemplified by the case of some people who are living in tropical climates where they have never experienced having winter season. Due to the fact that they only have summer and rainy season, they are not familiar with the word snow.

If a person who experienced having four seasons in their country uttered this word, some people will not understand it. On the other hand, Eskimos who live in a cold climate used more than fifty terms to pertain to “ snow” (Think Quest, 2000). The discussions above show that indeed language plays a very important role in the society. Its usage as a means of communication encompasses many aspects in terms of economics, politics as well as social factors. Language also has a more essential function in recognizing one country from the other.

In relation to this, even the territorial origins of individuals are easily identified through it. Nonetheless, its most important contribution is in shaping the thoughts of people especially on how they perceived reality. Language is not merely a means of communication it also becomes part of the people’s culture. It becomes one of the most appropriate symbols that describe a particular group. In all these, language is not only a tool that people use but it actually becomes a representation of who they are.