

CONTRASTIVE LINGUISTICS AND INTERCULTURAL COMMUNICATION

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ANNOTATION

This article gives information about Contrastive linguistics and intercultural communication. The field of linguistics can be divided into several subfields: general and descriptive linguistics, theoretical and applied linguistics, microlinguistics and macrolinguistics. intercultural communication can be understood via the same basic variables and processes used to describe other forms of communication.

Key words: communis, social, cross-cultural language-specific, typological, psycholinguistics, and sociolinguistics.

CONTRASTIVE LINGUISTICS

Contrary to what is often believed, most of the world's population is multilingual and multicultural, though multilingualism is not always recognised by public institutions. Living in these communities, human beings need a tool to communicate with each other, and to carry on human and social affairs. They seem know that "However many languages a person knows, that's how much a person is worth" - (Croatian folk saying). The main issues that will be discussed in the session are: terms dealt with contrastive linguistics, contrastive studies in the practice and science, trends and patterns of contrastive studies, challenges and problems in contrastive linguistics and contrastive linguistics definition.

The label contrastive has been used in linguistic inquiry mainly to refer to interlinguistic and inter-cultural comparisons. It has also been used for comparisons within languages and cultures. The purpose of contrastive studies is to compare linguistic and socio-cultural data across different languages (cross-linguistic/cultural perspective) or within individual languages (intra-linguistic/cultural perspective) in order to establish language-specific, typological and/or universal patterns, categories,

and features. 2 (1) Contrastive studies, contrastive analysis, and contrastive linguistics Depending on what particular authors feel to be the most appropriate description for the issue under discussion, the labels can be found as (Applied) Contrastive (Language) Studies, Contrastive Linguistics, Comparative (Historical or Typological) Linguistics, Contrastive (Interlanguage) Analysis, Contrastive (Generative) Grammar, Comparative Syntax, Contrastive Lexicology/Lexicography, Contrastive Pragmatics, Contrastive Discourse Analysis, or Contrastive Sociolinguistics, to mention but a few. Behind this terminological profusion there seems to exist a difference of scope with regard to the three main collocations the aforementioned terms tend to cluster around, namely: (i) contrastive studies, (ii) contrastive analysis, and (iii) contrastive linguistics. It would seem that contrastive studies name the most general field, embodying both the linguistic and the extralinguistic (e.g. cultural, ethnographic, semiotic, etc.) dimensions of contrastive research. By contrast, contrastive analysis is a way of comparing languages in order to determine potential errors for the ultimate purpose of isolating what needs to be learned and what does not need to be learned in a second-language-learning situation. Contrastive linguistics could be said to restrict its domain to just contrastive linguistic research, whether theoretical, focusing on a contrastive description of the languages/cultures involved, or practical/applied, intended to serve the needs of a particular application, as will be discussed in turn. Beside, contrastive linguistics was referred to as „parallel description“, „differential studies“, „differential description“, „dialinguistic analysis“, „analytical confrontation“, „analytical comparison“, „interlingual comparison“, as well as „comparative descriptive linguistics“, or „descriptive comparison“. The very term „contrastive linguistics“, however, was coined by Benjamin Lee Whorf in his article *Languages and Logic* published in 1941, where he drew the distinction between comparative and contrastive linguistics, maintaining that the latter was “of even greater importance for the future technology of thought” (1967: 240, Adapted from Kurtes: 233). (2) Language contact and multilingualism Language changes and its important source is the contact between different languages and resulting diffusion of linguistic traits between languages. Language contact occurs when speakers of two or more languages or varieties interact on a regular basis. Multilingualism is likely to have been the norm throughout human history, and today, most people in the world are multilingual. Before the rise of the

concept of the ethno-national state, monolingualism was the characteristic mainly of populations inhabiting small 3 islands. However, with the ideology that made one people, one state, and one language the most desirable political arrangement, monolingualism started to spread throughout the world. When speakers of different languages interact closely, it is typical for their languages to influence each other. Through sustained language contact over long periods, linguistic traits diffuse between languages, and languages belonging to different families may converge to become more similar. In areas where many languages are in close contact, this may lead to the formation of language areas in which unrelated languages share a number of linguistic features. Multilingualism is becoming a social phenomenon conducted by the process of globalization and cultural openness. It makes people in the society multilingual. A multilingual person is someone who can communicate in more than one language, either actively (through speaking, writing, or signing) or passively (through listening, reading, or perceiving). More specifically, the terms „bilingual“ and „trilingual“ are used to describe comparable situations in which two or three languages are involved. A multilingual person is generally referred to as a polyglot. Multilingual speakers have acquired and maintained at least one language during childhood, the so-called first language (L1). The first language (sometimes also referred to as the mother tongue) is acquired without formal education, by mechanisms heavily disputed.

INTERCULTURAL COMMUNICATION

Culture is the way of life of a people. It is social system which comprises the values, norms and ways of behaving in a human society. Wang, Brislin, Wang, Williams and Chao (2000) defined culture as the human part of the environment.“ In other words, culture is the non-biological aspects of life (The teaching and learning unit, University of Melbourne 2000). This definition connotes that everything people learn and do that are not related to their biological traits are, aspects of such people,,s culture. The concepts of culture and communication are strongly related, in the sense that, an individual cannot learn or acquire any aspect of culture without going through the process of communication. Culture is something that is learnt from parents, schools, the media and the broader community. (Melbourne University: 2000). From the above, we can rightly say that, culture is a product of communication. Also, communication being the basic feature of human life plays the most vital role in

shaping human culture and the ways of acquiring them. The concept of communication has quite so many definitions. From the etymological analysis of the word, communication is derived from the Latin „communicare“ meaning “to share”, and from the French “communis” meaning, „common“ (Alcalugo, 2003, in Andrew Asan Ate, National Open University of Nigeria). Thus, communication means, the sharing of meaning. The concept of communication, basically means, a meaning-making exercise. Chappel and Read (1984) defined it as „any means by which a thought is transferred from one person to another.“ Although, this definition focuses more on channels of communication, the meaning of the concept has been highlighted in the key words in the definition. Seema Hassan (2010) describes communication in the following words „the process of communication includes transmission of information, ideas, emotions, skills, knowledge, by using symbols, words, pictures, figures, graphs or illustrations.“ Seema tried to project the idea of being communication a one-way process. Contrarily, however, many contemporary scholars of communication emphasize the fact that, for communication to be effective it must be a two-way process. Succinctly, therefore, Solomon Anaeto, Olufemi Onabajo and James Osiyesi (2012) posit that: „communication is an exchange of meaning,“ despite the economy of its wordings, the definition has incorporated the most important gist of the concept of communication.“ Each participant comes into the communication situation with his or her own experience that he or she hopes to exchange with other participants. This fact has been corroborated by Prof. Umar Pate and Dr. Sharafa Dauda (2015) when they expressedly said: „It is a social process that facilitates exchange of ideas and feelings among and between individuals in societies.“ They added that: communication takes place at multiple levels and in different forms but all with the goal of transferring meaning from a source to an intended receiver with a hope of a feedback.“ This definition of communication is all-encompassing, as it contains all the essentials of communication process. It is more so as, it answers the questions in Lasswell’s (1948) analysis of communication process when he said: „who? Says what? In which channel? To whom? With what effect?“ (Anaeto, James of Olufemi, 2012).

Basically, intercultural communication means communication across different cultural boundaries. This means that, when two or more people with different cultural

backgrounds interact and communicate with each other or one another, intercultural communication is said to have taken place. For example, communication between Fulani and Tiv cultural groups is an intercultural communication, because, it occurs across cultural boundaries. Intercultural communication can thus be defined as „the sharing of information on different levels of awareness and control between people with different cultural backgrounds, where different cultural backgrounds include both national cultural differences and differences which are connected with participation in the different activities that exist within a national unit“ (Jens Allwood, 1985). „Intercultural communication takes place when individuals influenced by different cultural communities negotiate shared meaning in interactions“ (Ting-Toomey, S. 1999, in commGAP). What counts as intercultural communication depends, in part, to what one considers a culture. Some authorities like Gudykunst, limit the term intercultural communication to refer only to „communication among individuals from different nationalities“ (Gudykunst, 5 W.B; 2003). Other authorities, such as Judith and Nakayama, in contrast, expand the notion of intercultural communication to encompass inter-ethnic, inter-religious and even inter-regional communication, as well as communication among individuals of different sexual orientations. Russell Arent, in his“ Bridging the Cross-cultural Gap“, expatiate in the following, „When we talk of other cultures, we mean not only those who speak a language that is different from ours or who live in a different country or region; we also mean those who live in the same city or region but who do not share the same social groups. For example, a 14-year-old teenager does not typically communicate the same way as an 82-year-old senior citizen. Even if they were born and raised in the same neighborhood (in the city or in a rural area), their conversation could be just as “intercultural” as two people who came from opposite corners of the globe because they are from two subcultures,” (Arent, R. 2009).

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