

Grammar of Language

There are four aspects of elements of language –sounds, words, sentences and meaning .These aspects are called Grammar of Language.

1. Phonetics and Phonology:

Phonetics is the study of sounds in language. It provides methods for their description, classification and transcription. Phonetics is the study of speech sounds that the human voice is capable of producing whereas phonology is the study of a subset of limited sounds used in specific languages. Every language has a limited number of distinctive speech sounds called phonemes.

Phonology studies the range and function of sounds in specific languages. Therefore it is often referred to as a functional phonetics of one particular language.

2. Morphology:

Morphology is the study of words and word formation processes in language. It is concerned with the internal organisation of words in terms of morphemes. For example the word ‘boys’ is made up of two morphemes ‘boy’ and plural ‘-s’ suffix and the word ‘walked’ is made up of ‘walk’ and the past tense morpheme ‘-ed’. Morpheme is the basic unit of morphology. Phoneme is the smallest unit of language but it has no meaning of its own. A morpheme is the minimum meaningful unit of language.

Examples:

Write –one morpheme

Writing- two morphemes

Rewriting- three morphemes

Morphemes are combined into words according to rules of morphology.

3. Syntax:

Syntax studies how words combine into phrases, phrases combine into clauses and clauses join to form sentences. It also involves the study of grammatical elements in the sentence and their positions in the sentence.

4.Semantics:

Semantics examines the meaning aspect of language. It attempts to analyse the meaning of words as well as sentences. Meaning is always a very hazy and abstract concept. It is easy to define the meaning of words like ‘tiger’ or ‘tree’ but not so easy to define the meaning of words like ‘fear’ or ‘love’.