

Degree 3, (English Honours)

Paper – Eight

Section - 2

Subject- **Linguistics**

Lecture – 2

Definition, Scope and Branches of Linguistics

The Scope of Linguistics

In lecture 1 we have discussed the definition of Linguistics. In this lecture I am going to discuss **The Scope of Linguistics**. The question that arises now is : what areas and what aspects of language study is the linguist interested in ? in a broad way language is the expression of human thought, and all thought is expressed through language, hence all knowledge of the universe may fall within the scope of linguistics, and a scope may be a complex mess.

Yet linguistics being a science, has got to be a systematic discipline. So, the questions: what kind of behaviour does the linguist wants to investigate? need to be answered. A linguist has to study and describe language which is an enormously complex phenomenon. He therefore concentrates at any one time on one of the many different, though interrelated, aspects of his subject matter. His subject matter, broadly speaking, is the data of language, or the facts of language as it is spoken and written.

Thus, general linguistics covers a wide range of topics and its boundaries are difficult to define. In the centre is **phonetics**, the study of human speech sounds. A phonetician is concerned with the actual physical position of the tongue, teeth and vocal cords during the production of sounds, records and analyses sound waves. **Phonology** (sound patterning), **grammar and semantics**, (meaning) are the bread and butter of linguistics. They are the core of linguistics. Around the central core are various branches of linguistics which are being rapidly developed at the present time: such as **psycholinguistics, sociolinguistics, mathematical linguistics, philosophical linguistics, anthropological linguistics, stylistics and language teaching.**

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