

Abstract

The potential connection between language and thought holds great implications across professions, particularly for educators and interpreters. Language comprises much more than just its surface traits, and so a deeper analysis of its components, particularly the ones left unsaid, is crucial for culturally competent professionals. Through the analysis of existing theories of linguistic relativity and careful consideration of related research, one may unpack the cultural encoding behind language and determine just how much shared knowledge, language communities, and contextual knowledge influence true understanding of a message or speech act and therefore why it may be so important for professionals to gain a strong cultural awareness of many speech communities, rather than face the possibility of severe impacts resulting from a false sense of understanding.

Unspoken Aspects Of Language Across Professions

Findings

Language is a complex process (Chomsky, 2006; Larson, 1998; Patrie, 2012). Interpreting is therefore even more complex. A focus must be placed on meaning over form, as much more than just grammatical structures and rules create the language process. (Larson, 1998). Cultural significance varies across culture but can consistently be found embedded in the structures of each particular language.

Methodology

Through a meta-analysis of linguistic, anthropological, and interpreting research a clearer understanding of how these fields connect has been gained. Resources were selected based on the researcher's personal education encounters. Under the guidance of Elisa Maroney, Erin Trine, Kate Miller, Rhoda Smietanski, Robert Troyer, Uma Shrestha, and Vicki Darden (2017-2018) an emphasis of human communication was analyzed with respect to linguistics as well as anthropology. Texts selected pointed to the complexity of language and communication as well as the plethora of diverse factors related and resulting from these processes. As the researcher gained substantive knowledge on the process of language acquisition and the significance of cultural relativity, whilst entering an Interpreter Training Program, the connections between the fields were undeniable. Linguists and Anthropologists have analyzed the connection of language and thought for decades working to negotiate the significance of such findings as well as the many factors leading

into it. However, as the interpreting process became increasingly understood, undeniable parallels to linguistic principles were made. In light of language and thought being intertwined somehow, interpreters must factor this into their training and preparedness, especially with regards to full meaning transfer. If one doesn't truly understand the message, they have no possibility of justly interpreting it. An extensive amount of research was analyzed: communication, language, interpretation, as well as more conceptual studies. Many studies were found to be insubstantial for the purpose of this paper and therefore not mentioned. The cause of this was the extreme focus on Philosophy and more figurative, metaphorical explanations that would've required, such extensive background and therefore inevitably shift the focus of this paper. For those wishing to further understand the many facets of human language and meaning transfer this will lend valuable insights to spark an expansion of conversation and thought surrounding these topics.

Conclusion

Understanding the deeper concepts shared by different linguistic communities can help interpreters understand the implications of their work and how best to do justice to the message in each language. Although no strong theories can be confirmed, there is an inherent connection between language and thought patterning. Interpreters are more than just word re-formulators, they must fully understand and be a part of the linguistic and cultural communities they may represent in order to understand the unspoken aspects of each particular language. This means, if they don't truly understand the culture, they may not be accurately representing the message, and worse they won't realize they are lacking this crucial puzzle piece.

Professions

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INTERPRETING