

Why he says *sampaeng ri karuenga*? Introduction to Linguistics

By Darsita

Linguistics refers to study of language. *Why should we study language?* Victoria describes that language is the source of human life and power. Based on my experience when I know a language, such as: *semar loyo*, *dibalang sendal* and *kasur bosok*, according to my mind they are Javanese's language. They are phrases. They are abbreviation of cities in central Java. *Semar loyo* is Semarang, Solo, and Yogya, *dibalang sandal* is Purwodadi, batang, Pemalang, Semarang and Kendal, *kasur bosok* is Karang Anyal, Sukoharjo Boyolali, Solo and Klaten. This means I am able to produce strings of sounds that signify certain meanings and to understand or interpret the sounds produced by others.

Part of knowing a language means knowing what sounds or sign are in that language and what sounds are not. Victoria explains that one way this unconscious knowledge is revealed is by the way speakers of one language pronounce words from another language. If I speak only Java, for example, I may substitute a Java sound for a non-Java sound when pronouncing "foreign" words like Makassar *Bulang Rumallang nilassukangi*, *Battuk ri ballaknu ri subanngi*. If I pronounce it as the Makassar do, I am using sounds outside the Java sound system

Knowing the sound system of a language includes more than knowing the inventory of sounds. It means also knowing which sounds may start a word, and a word and follow each other. Sounds and sound pattern of Java or Makassar language, for example constitute only one part of its linguistics knowledge.

Beyond that I know that certain sequences of sounds signify certain concept or meaning. Another example: speaker of Manado understand what *bataka*, *tinutuan*, *pongoh* or *pongoh-pongoh* means, and that it means something different from *ikang*, *rica*, *balakama* and *bataka*. I know that *rica*, *balakama* and *bataka* are words, but *takaba*, or *arci* are not. When I know a language, I know words in that language: that is, I know which sequences of sounds relate to specific meanings and which do not. Base on those phenomena I would like to explain arbitrary relation of form and meaning.

1) **Arbitrary**

Language as arbitrary is no intrinsic or logical connection or relationship between a sounds form (signal) and its meaning.¹ I would like to give the example of arbitrary is the usage of preposition in Makassar language, namely:

¹ Haryati. "The Design Features of Human Language" in Introduction to Linguistics Material Lesson (Tangerang Selatan: English Department Pamulang University, 2016)., p.3

	Makassar Language	Bahasa Indonesia	English
a.	<i>Sampaeng ri banngia</i>	'tadi malam'	'last night; this night'
b.	<i>Sampaeng ri barikbasaka</i>	'tadi pagi'	'this morning'
c.	<i>Sampaeng ri tanngalloa</i>	'tadi siang'	'this noon'
d.	<i>Sampaeng ri karuenga</i>	'tadi sore'	'this evening'

A.			<i>Sentence Meaning</i>
a.	Makassar Language Community	:	<i>Bulang Rumallang nilassukangi</i>
b.	Bahasa Indonesia Community	:	'Bulan Ramadan dia dilahirkan' 'Dia lahir pada bulan Ramadhan'
c.	English Community	:	'He was born on Ramadhan;
B.			
a.	Makassar Language community	:	<i>Battuk ri ballaknu ri subanngi</i>
b.	Bahasa Indonesia community	:	'datang saya ke rumahmu kemarin' 'Saya datang ke rumahmu kemarin'
c.	English community	:	'I went to your house yesterday'

Those Makassar sentences above show that sounds and sound patterns of Makassar language constitute only one part of its linguistics knowledge. Beyond that we know that certain sequences of sounds signify certain concepts or meanings. Speakers of Makassar understand what *tullungallo* means, and that it means something different from *sidiminggu* or *limabulang*. When we know a language such as Makassar in this example, we know words in that language; that is we know which sequences of sounds relate to specific meaning and which do not.

On the other side, if we do not know a language, the words and sentences of that language will be mainly incomprehensible, because the relationship between speech sounds and the meaning they represent is, for the most part an arbitrary one.

2) Symbol

Language as symbol. The term symbol in the definition refers to the fact there is no connection, or at least in a few cases only minimal connection, between the sounds that people use and the objects to which these sounds refer.² Symbols are objects, characters, figures or colors to represent abstract ideas or concept.³ Language as a symbolic system, a system in which words are associated with object ideas and actions by conventions.⁴ Example:

	Sign	is associated with
a	Fork, spoon and plate	'restaurant'
b	A queen with black long hair	'starbucks coffee'
c	A person with red crossing	'no pedestrian crossing'

	Color	symbolizes
a	Red Cross	'hospital'
b	The color of Indonesian Flag.	'patriotism'

² David Wahyu Utomo. "Language as a symbol" in "Introduction to Linguistics Modul" (Tangerang Selatan: English Department Faculty of Letters Pamulang University Press, 2011), p 3.

³ Abrams. M.H. *A Glossary Literary Term*. 4th ed. (Canada Published Simultaneously), p. 195

⁴ *Op.cit.*, David Wahyu Utomo, p 3.

	Red and white	
c	Pink	'love and romance, caring, tenderness, acceptance and calm'

	Gesture/ body language	Symbolizes meaning
a	Hand to cheek	'thinking, evaluating'
b	Scratching	'tired'
c	Touching slightly rubbing nose	'rejection, doubt, lying'

	Sound in Sundanese	Symbolizes meaning
a	/aa/	'brother'
b	/tik tik tik/	'rain'
c	/o/	'understand'

3) Language as Human

The term human refers to the fact that the kind is system that interest us is possessed only by human beings and is very different from communication system that other forms of life possess. Just how different of course, is a question of some interest, for it can shed light on language to know in what ways human language are different from systems of nonhuman communication. The differences may be described to the process of evolution that the human species has gone through and result from the genetic characteristic that distinguish it from other species. No system animal communication make use of the design feature of duality, that is, of concurrent systems of sound and meaning and few system of animal communication employ discrete arbitrary signal.⁵

According to Gray (2001) language as human refers to an aspect of human nature that seems to distinguish human clearly from other animals. Human have their tendency to create beliefs systems, meaningful stories about their selves, their world, to govern their lives in accordance with those stories.⁶ Carl Rogers (1980) as Gray cited: "The only reality you can possibly know is the world as you perceive and experience it... and the only certainty is that those perceive realities are different. There are many real worlds' as there are people".⁷ Related to this concept, sound are basic to human language. Human have speech sounds primarily deals with how speech sounds are produced by means of human speech organs.⁸ The symbols in a language are called *morphemes*, defined as smallest meaningful unit of a language, that is, the smallest unit stand for objects, events, ideas, characteristics, or relationship.⁹ Example:

{dog}	is both a word and morpheme	
{-s}	is a morpheme but not a word	

⁵ *Ibid.*

⁶ Peter Gray. *Psychology*. (New York: Worth Publishers, 2001),, p. 603

⁷ *Ibid.*, Peter Gray.

⁸ *Op. cit.* David Wahyu Utomo. p 35.

⁹ *Op.cit.* Peter Gray. p. 435

{ <i>dogs</i> }	is a word consisting two morphemes	{ <i>dog</i> and <i>-s</i> }
-----------------	------------------------------------	------------------------------

{ <i>write</i> }	is both a word and morpheme	
{ <i>-s</i> }	is a morpheme but not a word	
{ <i>writes</i> }	is a word consisting two morphemes	{ <i>write</i> and <i>-s</i> }

4) Language as a system

A language must be systematic, for otherwise it could not be learned or used consistently. A very basic observation is that each language contain two systems rather than one, a system of sounds and a system of meanings. Only certain sounds are used by speakers of any language and only certain combinations of these sounds are possible.¹⁰

Example: a speaker of English can say:

(a)	<i>Bob is reading a good book.</i>
	But he cannot say, the following two sentences
(b)*	<i>A reading good Bob is book.</i>
(c)*	<i>Good a Bob is book reading</i>
Sentences (b) and (c) are starred (*) to show their unacceptability to a native speaker.	

Based on the example above, the sound system of a language allows a small number of sounds to be used over and over again in various combinations to form units of meaning. The meaning system allows these units of meaning to be arranged in an infinite number of ways to express both simple and complicated ideas.¹¹

1. Give the example of features of human language in:

Hocket as cited in Utomo¹² classifies 10 features of human language. Several of them are

Here are some understandings about: 1) Specialization

(1) Non-specialized communication

It is believed that the purpose of linguistics signal is communication and not some other biological functions. When humans speak or sign, it is generally intentional. This is the example of non-specialized communication. When a dog pants, it often communicates to its owner that it is hot or thirsty; however, the dog pants in order to cool itself off. This case refers to a biological function not a signal of communication.

(2) Specialized communication

On the contrary, this is the example of specialized communication. When a human wants to greet someone he/she knows, she/he will say hello, hi, or others. It means they use their language to communicate with their communities. Besides, when

¹⁰ *Op. cit.* David Wahyu Utomo. p. 2

¹¹ *Ibid.* David Wahyu Utomo. p. 2

¹² *Ibid.* David Wahyu Utomo. p. 5.

they point one of their fingers on the screen, it means they are searching something, or it can be they are looking at a schedule. Based on these examples, humans speak or sign to communicate with others intentionally.

In addition, humans use sounds to fulfill communication needs. Without having languages, we can not communicate properly. The kinds of communication are giving statement, asking a question, giving order, greeting, and other kinds. These kinds depend on some various factors: communities (people), culture, and communication situations. For example, when a language user greets his friend, it depends on situations of communication like formal and informal situations. For example, in formal situation, a language user should use formal utterance/expressions to his colleagues; for instance, he says “Good morning, sir”. However, when a language user communicates in an informal situation, he will say “Hi”. To conclude, in communication, the specialization is much needed, so humans can create proper communication.¹³ Here are some example:

Based on those concept, here the example of specialization: “Communication informal situation between Carlos and Hiroshi in School Life”

Carlos	:	<i>Hi. I'm Carlos Torres</i>
Hiroshi	:	<i>I'm glad to meet you, Carlos. My name is Hiroshi Watanabe</i>
Carlos	:	<i>Nice to meet you, Hiroshi. Are you a visa student?</i>
Hiroshi	:	<i>Yes, I am. I'm from Japan. How about you?</i>
Carlos	:	<i>I'm from Mexico, but I'm a permanent resident. How are your classes?</i>
Hiroshi	:	<i>Great! How about your classes?</i>
Carlos	:	<i>They are not too bad. The economics department is pretty good. Are you an undergraduate?</i>
Hiroshi	:	<i>Yes, I'm sophomore. And you?</i>
Carlos	:	<i>I'm in my junior year. Is economic your major?</i>
Hiroshi	:	<i>Yes, it is. I'm interested in business</i>
Carlos	:	<i>I'm too. Oh, here's the professor. Let's talk later.</i>

2) Semanticity

Here is an understandings about semanticity.

Semanticity is a specific sound signals are directly tied to central meanings. Each sound we produce will refer to the specific meaning. Humans use arbitrary or non arbitrary signal to deliver meaningful messages.¹⁴ Victoria Fromkin describes sound and sound patterns of our language constitute only one part of our linguistic knowledge. Beyond that we know that certain sequences of sounds signify certain concepts or meanings. Based on this concept, here the example of semanticity, namely:

Speakers of English understand what *boy* means, and that it means something different from *toy* or *girl* or *pterodactyl*. We also know that *toy* and

¹³ *Op.cit.* Haryati. 2016. p.5

¹⁴ *Op.cit.* Haryati. 2016. p.6

boy are words, but *moy* is not. When we know a language, we know words in that language; that is, we know which sequences of sounds relate to specific meanings and which do not.¹⁵

The example of Arbitrary in the context of semanticity, namely:

- (a) If we do not know a language, the words (and sentences) of that language will be mainly incomprehensible, because the relationship between speech sounds and the meanings they represent is, for the most part, an **arbitrary** one.
- (b) When we are acquiring a language we have to learn that the sounds represented by the letters *house* signify the concept ; if we know French, this same meaning is represented by *maison*; if we know Russian by *dom*; if we know Spanish, by *casa*.
- (c) Similarly,  is represented by *hand* in English, *main* in French, *nsa* in Twi, and *ruka* in Russian. The same sequence of sounds can represent different meanings in different languages.
- (d) The other example, the word *bolna* means ‘speak’ in Hindu-Urdu and ‘aching’ in Russian; *bis* means ‘devil’ in Ukrainian and ‘twice’ in Latin; a *pet* is a domestic animal in English and a fart in Catalan; and the sequence of sounds *taka* means ‘hawk’ in Japanese, ‘fist’ in Quechua, ‘a small bird’ in Zulu, and ‘money’ in Bengali.

This conventional and arbitrary relationship between the form (sounds) and meaning (concept) of a word.

The example of non-Arbitrary in the context of semanticity, namely:

If we see someone using a sign language we do not know, it is doubtful that we will understand the message from the signs alone. A person who knows Chinese Sign Language (CSL) would find it difficult to understand American Sign Language (ASL), and vice versa. Many signs were originally like miming, where the relationship between form and meaning is not arbitrary. Bringing the hand to the mouth to mean “eating,” as in miming, would be nonarbitrary as a sign. Over time these signs may change, just as the pronunciation of words changes, and the miming effect is lost. These signs become conventional, so that the shape or movement of the hands alone does not reveal the meaning of the signs.

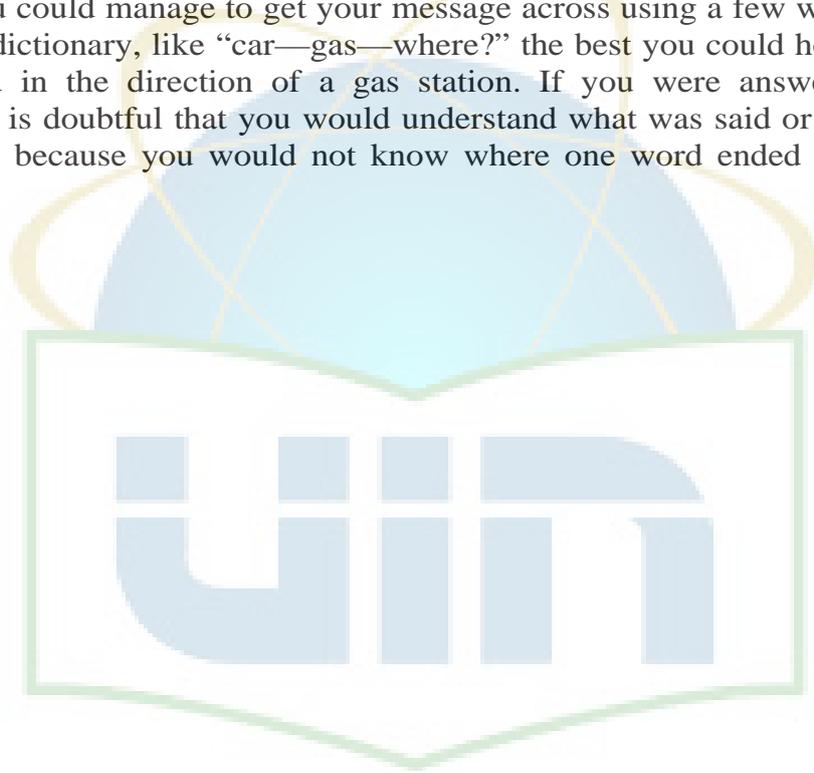
There is some **sound symbolism** in language—that is, words whose pronunciation suggests their meanings. Most languages contain **onomatopoeic** words like *buzz* or *murmur* that imitate the sounds associated with the objects or actions they refer to. But even here, the sounds differ from language to language and reflect the particular sound system of the language. In English *cock-a-doodle-doo* is an onomatopoeic word whose meaning is the crow of a rooster, whereas in Finnish the rooster’s crow is *kukkokiekuu*. Forget *gobble gobble*

¹⁵ Victoria Fromkin, Robert Rodman and Nina Hyams. 2009, “What is Language” in *Introduction to Language*. (Mexico: Wadsworth, 2009)., p 3-4

when you're in Istanbul; a turkey in Turkey goes *glu-glu*.

Sometimes particular sound combinations seem to relate to a particular concept. Many English words beginning with *gl* relate to sight, such as *glare*, *glint*, *gleam*, *glitter*, *glossy*, *glaze*, *glance*, *glimmer*, *glimpse*, and *glisten*. However, *gl* words and their like are a very small part of any language, and *gl* may have nothing to do with “sight” in another language, or even in other words in English, such as *gladiator*, *glucose*, *glory*, *glutton*, *globe*, and so on.

To know a language we must know words of that language. But no speaker knows all the entries in an unabridged dictionary and even if someone did he would still not know that language. Imagine trying to learn a foreign language by buying a dictionary and memorizing words. No matter how many words you learned, you would not be able to form the simplest phrases or sentences in the language, or understand a native speaker. No one speaks in isolated words. And even if you could manage to get your message across using a few words from a traveler's dictionary, like “car—gas—where?” the best you could hope for is to be pointed in the direction of a gas station. If you were answered with a sentence it is doubtful that you would understand what was said or be able to look it up, because you would not know where one word ended and another began.



3) Prevarication

Here is an understandings about prevarication.

Humans use language to create effective communication in order to avoid social relationship problems. Prevarication refers to human's ability to say things that are completely false. In daily life, many language users always lie by using their languages. For example, many children often lie about their actions (after doing a bad thing like cheating something from their friend); meanwhile, they will not lie about their feelings (angry, sad, happy, and other feelings). Moreover, when they are adult, they start creating much lie like cheating on exam, going to somewhere without getting permission). Their lie will be more sophisticated, and cheating is a common activity for them.¹⁶ Based on this concept here is the example.

Example: Dolores fells strange to see Diane's cart

Topic: "Save a lot Market: Cheaper than the others"

Dolores	:	Diane! Hello, there!
Diane	:	Oh, hello Doloree.
Dolores	:	My goodness. You certainly have a lot of things in your cart!
Diane	:	Yes, well you know we have five children
Dolores	:	Are you buying Dishwashing Liquid? There are cheaper brands
Diane	:	It's more expensive than the other brands, but I think it taste longer.
Dolores	:	Why are you buying that huge package of spaghetti? There are smaller size...
Diane	:	The larger size is always cheaper. Well nice seeing you again...
		She talk to herself Dolores is right the smaller size is cheaper, but ...

From that conversation above, shows two aspect of **prevarication**, such as:

1. Dolores fells strange to see Diane's cart because she buy a lot of things.
2. Diane lie to Dolores. In fact, she is agree to Dolores to buy it, but Diane need a lot of spaghetti for a week.
3. The conversation above shows the feeling of speakers are happy, and strange

¹⁶ *Op.cit.* Haryati. 2016. p.6

2. Human beings can communicate with other human beings by using nonlinguistic human communication. What does it mean?

Human beings can communicate with other human beings by using non linguistics human communication, it means they communicate by using sign or sign language. Sign languages do not use sounds to express meanings. Instead, they are visual-gestural systems that use hand, body and facial gestures as the forms used to present word and grammatical rules. Signed languages have their own grammatical rules and a mental lexicon of signs, all encoded through a system of gestures, and are otherwise equivalent to spoken languages. Signers are affected by performance factors just as speakers are; slips of the hand occur similar to slips of the tongue. Finger fumblers amuse signers just as tongue twisters amuse speakers. These and other language games play on properties of the “sound” systems of the spoken and signed languages.¹⁷

3. Give the phonetics for these words!

	English words	English Phonetics Symbol
a.	put	/pʊt/
b.	boat	/bəʊt/; /bɔʊt/
c.	speed	/spi:d/
d.	cake	/keɪk/
e.	sing	/sɪŋ/

Source: AS. Hornby. 2015. *Oxford Advanced Learner's Dictionary*. Oxford: Oxford University Press

4. What is the relationship between linguistic and teaching?

There are several relationship between linguistics and teaching, such as:

- a. Although languages are learned, they must be taught;
- b. Languages must be some teaching bout linguistics matters;
- c. Linguists can be expected to contribute some understanding of language to this teaching; for example: teaching of native language; teaching reading text of foreign language, or local language
- d. Teacher may also offer advice about the substance of what must be taught;
- e. Teacher may also pointing out what appear to linguist to be the fact that must be mastered.
- f. Teacher venture statement about how what apparently must be taught or should be thought.¹⁸

¹⁷ *Op.cit.* Victoria Fromkin. p. 15

¹⁸ *Op.cit* David Wahyu Utomo. p. 17

Here is an example

I would like to deliver my idea or my linguistic skill to other person. For instance I would like to explain about “*Grammar: Modal Verbs Past Ability and Permission.*” I should prepare some knowledge about Grammar. I should know English grammar well.

	Example	Notes
Ability	<i>I couldn't understand the apartment manager</i>	Could or couldn't means “was or wasn't able to”
Permission	Could student rent apartment ten years ago? No, they couldn't	Couldn't means “weren't allowed to”

I explain to other person who doesn't know “*Grammar: Modal Verbs Past Ability and Permission.*” or a person who want to study English grammar.

Bibliography

Bibliography

Abrams. M.H. *A Glosary Literary Term*. 4th ed. Canada Published Simultaneously

Haryati. 2016. “The Design Features of Human Language” in *Introduction to Linguistics Material Lesson*. Tangerang Selatan: English Department Pamulang University.

Hornby. A.S 2015. *Oxford Advanced Learner's Dictionary*. Oxford: Oxford University Press.

Peter Gray. 2001. *Psychology*. New York: Worth Publishers.

Utomo, David Wahyu. 2011. “Language as a symbol” in “Introduction to Linguistics Modul” Tangerang Selatan: English Department Faculty of Letters Pamulang University Press.

Victoria Fromkin, Robert Rodman and Nina Hyams. 2009, “What is Language” in *Intorduction to Language*. Mexico: Wadsworth.

