

Chapter 4

Deciding where to begin

The title of this chapter means the following : language is a very complex phenomenon. If one wants to study it, where should one begin ?

Language is considered a type of game in that any game is a type of activity governed by rules. Three important things are related to any type of game. They are:

- A_ aims of the game.
- B_ the principles of interaction.
- C_ the permitted moves.

Since language is considered as a type of game, it has :

- A_ Aims
- B_ Principles
- C_ Permitted moves

A_ The aims of language are :

- 1_ obtain information
- 2_ make someone do something
- 3_ make a promise

This means that the main aim of language is communication.

B_ The principles of interaction in language : people take it in turn to speak. So, sometimes we are speakers, sometimes we are listeners.

C_ The permitted moves of language simply refer to “ Rules of Grammar “.

The majority of linguists prefer to start with the permitted moves when they start to study a language.

Universal and particular linguists :

Some linguists are interested in studying one language, those are referred to as particularists. Other linguists are interested in knowing more about the phenomenon of language. So, they study more than one language. Those are referred to as universalists.