

Culture and Language

Culture

Culture is the ideas and knowledge of a particular group of people, including language, religion, cuisine, social habits, music and arts. It can be defined as “socially acquired knowledge”. We get this knowledge (culture) without any conscious effort.

Young children call both ‘dog’ and ‘horse’ with a same childish name – *bow-wow*. If the child’s first language is English, it learns with time that both are two different animals – *dog* and *horse*.

Categories

A **category** is a group which has common features. Some languages may have many expressions for types of rain or kind of coconut/banana. The other languages may have only a few words.

The Inuit of Greenland have

black,

white,

red,

green, and

yellow colours. (5 in total)

English has a list of colours like

black,

white,

red,

green,

yellow,

blue.

brown,

purple,

pink,

orange, and

gray.

Languages of people with advanced technology have more colours.

Words can be divided into two categories: **Lexicalized categories and non-lexicalized categories.**

Lexicalized categories are expressed in single words.

Non-lexicalized categories are not expressed as single words.

The same concepts are expressed as lexicalized category in one language and non-lexicalized category in another language.

English has various lexical terms for Snow and non-lexical terms also.

Lexical terms for **snow** in English

Sleet,

Slush,

Snowflake,

Avalanche, and (snow related vocabulary)

Blizzard (snow related vocabulary)

Non-lexicalized terms

Fresh snow,

Powdery snow, and

Spring snow

Humans inherit language and knowledge. Both are inter related. We can manipulate language and create terms to express us.

The Sanskrit word **divasam** means any day.

But in Tamil it has been adapted to express death anniversary. The human manipulates language.

Reference= The Study of Language by Gorge Yule.

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