

Categories – continued

Kinship Terms and Time Concepts

Kinship Terms

Kinship Terms are examples of lexicalized categories. Kinship Terms are words use to refer to people of the same family. Though we have kinship terms in all languages, there are differences.

E.g. of kinship terms

brother

mother

grandmother

English has the word ‘uncle’. It refers to

i. male parent’s brother and also

ii. female parent’s brother

Father refers to male parent and uncle refers to male parent’s brother. The difference between these two concepts are lexicalized with two different words in English.

But the difference between the two concepts - male parent’s brother and female parent’s brother are not lexicalized. They have the same word ‘uncle’.

In Tamil these differences are clearly lexicalized.

பெரியப்பா, சித்தப்பா (male parent’s brother), மாமா(female parent’s brother).

Hindi has more clearly distinct kinship terms.

Time Concepts

The time concepts of English are related to the clock time. English has time words like ‘two days’ or ‘seven days’ are expressed in the same way ‘two people’ or ‘seven books’. In the Hopi language of Arizona, there are no such terms for time concepts, It does not even have the words like ‘week and ‘weekend’.

