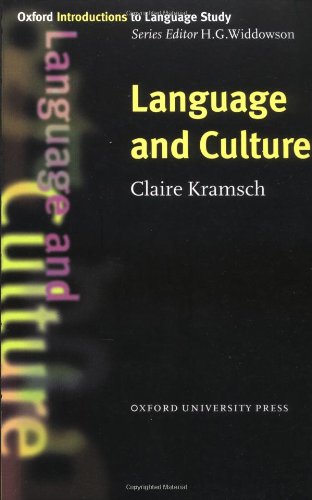
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College of Languages & Translation

[Fall 2013]



**Course Instructor(s)**

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Language & Culture 2

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| **KSU Logo.bmpKSU Logo.bmpLanguage & Culture 2 - Fall 2013** | | | |
| ***Week*** | ***Hejri*** | ***Gregorian*** | ***Lessons…*** |
| **1** | **Sun. Shawwal 25** | **Sun. Sep. 1** | **Registration Week (Dropping / Adding Courses)** |
| **2** | **Sun. Thul Qida 2** | **Sun. Sep. 8** | Introductory Week |
| **3** | **Sun. Thul Qida 9** | **Sun. Sep. 15** | **Chapter 1:** The Relationship of Language and Culture |
| **4** | **Sun. Thul Qida 16** | **Sun. Sep. 22** | **Continue**: The Relationship of Language and Culture + Research |
| **إجازة اليوم الوطني Monday, Sep. 23 / Thul Qida 17** | | | |
| **5** | **Sun. Thul Qida 23** | **Sun. Sep. 29** | **Chapter 2:** Meaning As Sign | |
| **6** | **Sun. Thul Hija 1** | **Sun. Oct. 6** | **Continue Ch. 2**: Meaning As Sign | |
| **7** | **(Sun., Oct. 11 / Thul Hijja 6 to Sun., Oct. 20 / Thul Hijja 15) إجازة عيد الأضحى** | | | |
| **8** |
| **8** | **Mon. Thul Hija 16** | **Mon. Oct. 21** | [Presentation**] Chapter 3**: Meaning As Action | |
| **9** | **Sun. Thul Hija 22** | **Sun. Oct. 27** | [Presentation**] Chapter 4:** Spoken Language, Oral Language | |
| **10** | **Sun. Thul Hija 29** | **Sun. Nov. 3** | **🕮 *1st In-term Exam*** | |
| **11** | **Sun. Muharam 7** | **Sun. Nov. 10** | [Presentation**] Chapter 5:** Print Language, Literate Culture | |
| **12** | **Sun. Muharam 14** | **Sun. Nov. 17** | [Presentation**] Chapter 6:** Language and Cultural Identity | |
| **13** | **Sun. Muharam 21** | **Sun. Nov. 24** | **🕮 *2nd In-term Exam*** | |
| **14** | **Sun. Muharam 28** | **Sun. Dec. 1** | [Presentation**] Continue Ch. 6:** Language and Cultural Identity | |
| **15** | **Sun. Safar 5** | **Sun. Dec. 8** | [Presentation**] Chapter 7:** Current Issues | |
| **16** | **Sun. Safar 12** | **Sun. Dec. 15** | **🖎 All Make-up Exams** | |
| **Sun. Dec. 22 – Thurs. Jan. 16**  **Sun. Safar. 19 – Mon. Rabea1. 14** | | | Oral Exams & Revision |
| 🖎... Written Exams |
| **1st In-term Exam: 25 pts. 2nd In-term: 25 pts. Presentation & Research: 10 pts.** | | | |
| بداية إجازة منتصف العام /نهاية دوام الخميس- 16/1/2014  بداية الدراسة والتهيئة للفصل الثاني -26/1/2014 | | | |

Dear Language & Culture 2 Students, Welcome...

This course is all a matter of regularly attending lectures and studying (i.e. understanding) the booklet, as well as keeping up each week with what step you need to be at with regards to the research paper that you’ll present at the end of this course. Thus, I can’t stress enough the importance of open, and more importantly honest, communication between us. If you have any problems, please don’t hesitate to talk to us. You can contact us by e-mail ([dalsibai@ksu.edu.sa](mailto:dalsibai@ksu.edu.sa)) ([naalyami@ksu.edu.sa](mailto:naalyami@ksu.edu.sa)). You can also use our course Twitter account to stay updated: @LC2\_colt

**CLASSES…**

Classes will typically be lectures explaining the lessons you have in your book, in addition to the presentation of video clips in class related to our lessons when possible. Parts of some lectures will guide to the steps you need to write your final research paper. Regarding our lectures, I encourage you to participate in class with your questions, observations, difference of opinions, additions, etc. If you are absent, you are responsible for any information given during that lecture.

**EXAMS & GRADES**

As for the exams, study each lesson thoroughly after it has been given in class. You shouldn’t try cramming in all the information one day before the exam as this will result, more than likely, in poor performance. The lessons are filled with details which need to be read, definitely more than once, to be learned/understood.

Once you take the exam, you **CAN NOT** take it again under **ANY** circumstance. There will be a make-up exam (on a pre-set date found in the syllabus - at the end of the semester) only for those who were unable to take the exam due to verifiable excuses (**extreme** medical or social circumstances only). If you also miss the make-up exam, you will get a “zero” and not be given another chance to take the make-up exam. If you need to inform us of something, simply come and talk to us in our offices or send us an email. We reply to emails as soon as we get them so “I couldn’t find you,” should never be an excuse.

**ATTENDANCE & WARNINGS**

Regular attendance is a MUST! Your medical excuses **will not** be taken into consideration when presenting the warnings (the limit is 25% for the warnings). Therefore, it is of utmost importance that you **NEVER** exceed the 50% absence limit! I will not hesitate to ban any student exceeding the 50% absence limit. Attendance will usually be taken **10 minutes after class starts**. If you arrive later, come in and attend the rest of the lecture. ***Being late 3 times will equal to being absent one time.***

***Breakdown of Grades:***

|  |  |
| --- | --- |
| ***1st In-term*** | ***25*** |
| ***2nd In-term*** | ***25*** |
| ***Research Paper & Presentation*** | ***10*** |
| ***Final Exam*** | ***40*** |
| ***Total*** | ***100*** |

***Best of Luck!***

Makeup Exam Policy

Once you take the in-term exam, you CAN NOT take it again under ANY circumstance. There will be a make-up exam ONLY for those who were unable to take the exam due to verifiable excuses (EXTREME medical or social circumstances only)

AT THE END OF THE SEMESTER.

You **MUST** bring a copy of the excuse on the day of the makeup exam or else you WILL NOT BE ALLOWED TO TAKE THE EXAM.

You can contact us anytime via email [dalsibai@ksu.edu.sa](mailto:dalsibai@ksu.edu.sa)

[naalyami@ksu.edu.sa](mailto:naalyami@ksu.edu.sa)

**Chapter 1**

**The Relationship of Language and Culture**

Language is the principal means whereby we conduct our social lives.

***🗨 Language is bound up with culture in multiple and complex ways:***

**(1)** 1 To begin with, the words people utter refer to common experience. They express facts, ideas or events that are commun­icable because they refer to a stock of knowledge about the world that other people share. Words also reflect their authors' attitudes and beliefs, their point of view that are also those of others. In both cases, *language expresses cultural reality.*

**(2)** But members of a community or social group do not only express experience; they also create experience through language. They give meaning to it through the medium they choose to communicate with one another, for example, speaking on the telephone or face-to-face, writing a letter or sending an e-mail message, reading the newspaper or interpreting a graph or a chart. The way in which people use the spoken, written, or visual medium itself creates meanings that are understandable to the group they belong to, for example, through a speaker's tone of voice, accent, conversational style, gestures and facial expres­sions. Through all its verbal and non-verbal aspects, *language embodies cultural reality.*

**(3)** Finally, language is a system of **signs** that is seen as having itself a cultural value. Speakers identify themselves and others through their use of language; they view their language as a symbol of their social identity. The prohibition of its use is often perceived by its speakers as a rejection of their social group and their culture. Thus we can say that *language symbolizes cultural reality.*

***🗨 What does “Culture” actually mean?***

One way of thinking about culture is to contrast it with nature.

**Nature** refers to what is born and grows organically (from the Latin *nascere*: to be born);

**Culture** refers to what has been grown and groomed (from the Latin *colerei* to cultivate).

The word culture evokes the traditional nature/nurture debate: Are human beings mainly what nature [for humans: mainly genes] determines them to be from birth or what culture enables them to become through socialization and schooling? **🎬**

*Essential Oils - are wrung –*

*The Attar from the Rose*

*Be not expressed by Suns - alone –*

*It is the gift of Screws -*

*The General Rose - decay – But this - in Lady's Drawer Make Summer - When the Lady lie In Ceaseless Rosemary -*

******

Emily Dickinson's poem expresses in a stylized way the relationship of nature, culture, and language. A rose in a flower bed “The General Rose” is a phenomenon of nature. Beautiful, yes, but faceless and nameless among others of the same species. Perishable. Forgettable. Nature alone cannot reveal nor preserve the particular beauty of a particular rose at a chosen moment in time. Culture, by contrast, is not bound by biological time. Like nature, it is a 'gift', but of a different kind. Through a sophisticated techno­logical procedure, developed especially to extract the essence of roses, culture forces nature to reveal its 'essential' potentialities. The word “Screws” suggests that this process takes work. By crushing the petals, a great deal of the rose must be lost in order to get at its essence. Culture makes the rose petals into a rare perfume, purchased at high cost, for the personal use of a particular lady. The lady may die, but the fragrance of the rose's essence (the Attar [عطر]) can make her immortal, in the same manner as the language of the poem immortalizes both the rose and the lady, and brings both back to life in the imagination of its readers. Indeed, 'this' very poem, left for future readers in the poet's drawer, can 'Make Summer' [i.e. remain “alive”] for readers even after the poet's death. The word and the technology of the word have immortalized nature.

***🗨 The Importance of Both “Culture” and “Nature”: Liberating & Constraining:***

The poem itself bears testimony that nature and culture both need each other. The poem wouldn't have been written if there were no natural roses; but it would not be understood if it didn't share with its readers some common assumptions and expecta­tions. Like the screws of the rose press, these common collective expectations can be liberating, as they endow a universal rose with a particular meaning by imposing a structure, so to speak, on nature. But they can also be constraining.

***🗨 Constraining… How?***

****(A)** Particular meanings are adopted by the **speech community** and imposed in turn on its members, who find it then difficult, if not impossible, to say or feel anything original about roses. For example, once a bouquet of roses has become codified as a society's way of expressing love, it becomes controversial, if not risky, for lovers to express their own particular love without resorting to the symbols that their society imposes upon them, and to offer each other as a sign of love, say, chrysanthemums instead—which in Germany, for example, are reserved for the dead! 🎬

**(B)** Etiquette, expressions of politeness, social *dos* and *don'ts* shape people's behavior through child rearing, behavioral upbringing, schooling, and professional training.

**(C)** The use of written language is also shaped and socialized through culture. Not only what it is proper to write to whom in what circumstances, but also which text genres are appropriate (the application form, the business letter, the political pamphlet), because they are sanctioned by cultural conventions.

These ways with language, or norms of interaction and interpretation, form part of the invisible ritual imposed by culture on language users. This is culture's way of bringing order and predictability into people's use of language.

***🗨 This double effect of culture on the individual - both liberating and constraining -plays itself out on the social, the historical and the metaphorical planes:***

**(A) Social (achieved mainly through 2 notions):**

★**Speech community**: People who use the same linguistic code. People who identify themselves as members of a social group (family, neighborhood, professional or ethnic affiliation, and nation) acquire common ways of viewing the world through their interactions with other members of the same group. These views are reinforced through institutions like the family, the school, the workplace, religious duties, the government, and other sites of socialization throughout their lives. Common attitudes, beliefs, and values are reflected in the way members of the group use language—for example, what they choose to say or not to say and how they say it.

★**Discourse communities:** The common ways in which members of a social group use language to meet their social needs:

- The grammatical, lexical, and phonological features of their language (for example, teenage

talk, professional jargon, political rhetoric).

- “Discourse accent” The topics people choose to talk about, the way they present

information, and the style with which they interact. For instance, Americans have been

socialized into responding 'Thank you' to any compliment, as if they were acknowledging a

friendly gift: 'I like your sweater! —'Oh, thank you!' The French, who tend to perceive such a

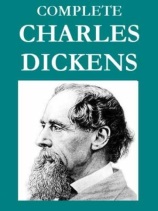
compliment as an intrusion into their privacy, would rather downplay the compliment and

minimize its value: 'Oh really? It's already quite old!' The reactions of both groups are based

on the differing values given to compliments in both cultures, and on the differing degrees of

embarrassment caused by personal com­ments.

**(B) Historical:** There is another way of viewing culture—one which takes a more historical perspective. For the cultural ways which can be identified at any one time have evolved and become solidified over time, which is why they are so often taken for natural behavior. They have remained in the memories of group members who have experienced them firsthand or merely heard about them, and who have passed them on in speech and writing from one generation to the next. For example, Emily Dickinson's allusion to life after death is grounded in the hope that future generations of readers will be able to understand and appreciate the social value of rose perfume and the funeral custom of surrounding the dead with fragrant rosemary. The culture of everyday practices draws on the culture of shared history and traditions. People identify themselves as members of a society to the extent that they can have a place in that society's history and that they can identify with the way it remembers its past, turns its attention to the present, and anticipates its future. This diachronic view of culture focuses on the way in which a social group represents itself and others through its material productions over time—its technological achievements, its monuments, its works of art, its popular culture—that mark the development of its historical identity. This material culture is reproduced and preserved through institutions that are also part of the culture, like museums, schools, public libraries, governments, corporations, and the media. The Eiffel Tower or the Mona Lisa exist as material artifacts, but they have been kept alive and given the prominence they have on the cultural market through what artists, art collectors, poets, novelists, travel agents, tourist guides have said and written about them. Language is not a culture-free code, distinct from the way people think and behave, but, rather, it plays a major role in the perpetuation of culture, particularly in its printed form.

**(C) Metaphorical:**These two layers of culture combined, the social (synchronic) and the historical (diachronic), have often been called the **sociocultural context** of language study. There is, in addition, a third essential layer to culture, namely, the imagination. Discourse communities are characterized not only by facts and artifacts, but by common dreams, fulfilled and unfulfilled imaginings. These imaginings are mediated through the language, that over the life of the commu­nity reflects, shapes, and is a metaphor for its cultural reality. Thus the city of London is inseparable, in the cultural imagination of its citizens, from Shakespeare and Dickens. The Lincoln Memorial Building in Washington has been given extra meaning through the words “I have a dream…” that Martin Luther King Jr. spoke there in 1963. These are intimately linked not only to the culture that is and the culture that was, but also to the culture of the imagination that governs people's decisions and actions far more than we may think.🎬

***🗨 Insiders vs. Outsiders***

To identify themselves as members of a community, people have to define themselves jointly as insiders against others, whom they thereby define as outsiders. Culture, as a process that both includes and excludes, always entails the exercise of power and control. The rose press in the Dickinson poem, one could argue, yields exquisite perfume, but at a high price. Not only must the stem and the petals be ultimately discarded, but only the rich and powerful can afford to buy the perfume. Similarly, only the powerful decide whose values and beliefs will be deemed worth adopting by the group, which historical events are worth commemorating, which future is worth imagining. Cultures, and especially national cultures, resonate with the voices of the powerful, and are filled with the silences of the powerless. Both words and their silences contribute to shaping one's own and others' culture. For example, Edward Said describes how the French constructed for themselves a view of the culture of 'the Orient'. The Orient itself was not given a voice. Such **orientalism**, Said argues, has had a wide-ranging effect on the way Europeans and Americans have viewed the Middle East, and imposed that view on Middle Easterners themselves, who implicitly accept it when they see themselves the way the West sees them. Similarly, scholars in Gender Studies and Ethnic Studies, have shown the **hegemonic** effects of dominant cultures and the authority they have in representing and in speaking for the Other. 🎬

***🗨 Accurate Cultural “Representation”:***

As the considerations above suggest, the study of language has always had to deal with the difficult issue of **representation** and representativity when talking about another culture. Who is entitled to speak for whom, to represent whom through spoken and written language? Who has the authority to select what is representative of a given culture: the outsider who observes and studies that culture, or the insider who lives and experiences it? According to what and whose criteria can a cultural feature be called representative of that culture? In the social, the historic, and the imagined dimension, culture is heterogeneous. Members of the same discourse community all have different biographies and life experiences, they may differ in

age, gender, or ethnicity, they may have different political opinions. Moreover, cultures change over time as we can see from the difficulty many contemporary readers might have with the Dickinson poem. And certainly Ladies in the nineteenth century imagined the world differently from readers at the end of the twentieth. In summary, culture can be defined as membership in a discourse community that shares a common social space and history, and common imaginings. Even when they have left that community, its members may retain, wherever they are, a common system of standards for perceiving, believing, evaluat­ing, and acting. These standards are what is generally called their 'culture’.

The different ways of looking at culture and its relationship to language raise a fundamental question: to what extent are the world views and mental activities of members of a social group shaped by, or dependent on, the language they use?

***🗨 Linguistic Relativity vs. Linguistic Determinism:***

“Linguistic relativity” is the theory that languages affect the thought processes of their users. Some scholars put forward the idea that different people speak differently because they think differently, and that they think differently because their language offers them different ways of expressing the world around them (hence the notion of linguistic relativity). This notion was picked up in the United States by the linguist Franz Boas (1858-1942), and subsequently by Edward Sapir (1884-1939) and his pupil Benjamin Lee Whorf (1897-1941), in their studies of American Indian languages. Whorf's views on the interdependence of language and thought have become known under the name of **Sapir-Whorf hypothesis**. 🎬

The Sapir-Whorf hypothesis makes the claim that the structure of the language one uses influences the manner in which one thinks and behaves. Whorf recounts that while he was working as a fire insurance risk assessor, he noticed that the way people behaved toward things was often dangerously correlated to the way these things were called. For example, the sight of the sign **'empty'** on empty gasoline drums would prompt passers by to toss cigarette butts into these drums, not realizing that the remaining gasoline fumes would be likely to cause an explosion. In this case, the English sign **'empty'** evoked a feeling of “neutral space, free of danger”. Whorf concluded that the reason why different languages can lead people to different actions is because language filters their perception and the way they categorize experience.

So, for example, according to Whorf, whereas English speakers conceive of time as a linear, objective sequence of events encoded in a system of past, present, and future tenses (for example, 'He ran' or 'He will run'), or a separate number of days as encoded in basic numerals (for example, ten days), the Hopi conceive of it as a *duration* in the analysis and reporting of experience (for example, 'They stayed ten days' becomes in Hopi 'They stayed until the eleventh day' ). Thus it would be very difficult, Whorf argues, for an English and a Hopi physicist to understand each other's thinking, given the major differences between their languages.

The Sapir-Whorf hypothesis has been subject to fierce contro­versy since it was first formulated by Whorf in 1940. The proposition that we are prisoners of our language seemed unacceptable. And indeed it would be absurd to suggest that Hopis cannot have access to modern scientific thought because their language doesn't allow them to. We can see how a strong version of Whorf s relativity principle could easily lead to prejudice and racism. After all, it is always possible to translate across languages, and if this were not so, Whorf could never have revealed how the Hopis think.

The strong version of Whorf's hypothesis, therefore, that posits that language determines the way we think, cannot be taken seriously (Linguistic Determinism 🗶), but a weak version, supported by the findings that there are cultural differences in the semantic associations evoked by seemingly common concepts, is generally accepted nowadays (Linguistic Relativity ✓).

What is most important in our culture is stressed in our language: The way a given language encodes experience semantically makes aspects of that experience more salient for the users of that language. For example, Navajo children speak a language that encodes differently through different verbs the action of 'picking up a round object' like a ball and 'picking up a long, thin, flexible object' like a rope. When presented with a blue rope, a yellow rope, and a blue stick, and asked to choose which object goes best with the blue rope, most monolingual Navajo children chose the yellow rope, thus associating the objects on the basis of their physical form, whereas monolingual English-speaking children almost always chose the blue stick, associating the objects on the basis of their color, although, of course, both groups of children are perfectly able to distinguish both colors and shapes. This experiment is viewed as supporting the weak version of the Whorf hypothesis that language users tend to sort out and distinguish experiences differently according to the semantic categories provided by their respective codes. We are, then, not prisoners of the cultural meanings offered to us by our language, but can enrich them in our pragmatic interactions with other language users.

“Like having binocular vision gives us 3-D depth of vision, so does having fluency in more than one language gives a "3-D" depth of cultural awareness.” -Phil Bartle, PhD

**Further Proof: 🎬**

Some researchers point to the American Indian dialect of Zuni. Speakers of the language don't have words to distinguish between yellow and orange. The identification of some objects is more difficult for those who speak Zuni than for English-speaking people.

English, for example, has two separate words for (red) and a mixture of red and white (pink) but does not have two separate words for blue and a mixture of blue and white, like in Russian. [“goluboy” –blue] [“senynee” – dark blue]



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**?**

**Glossary:**

**Speech community:** A social group that shares knowledge of one linguistic code and knowledge also of its patterns of use.

**Discourse community:** A social group that has a broadly agreed set of common public goals and purposes in its use of spoken and written language.

**Discourse accent:** A speaking or writing style that bears the mark of a discourse community's ways of using language.

**sociocultural context:** The synchronic (social, societal) and the diachronic (historical) context of language use.

**Orientalism:** Term coined by Edward Said to denote the colonialist perspective taken by European writers on the Orient, and by extension, a colonialist view of any foreign culture.

**Hegemony:** A term coined by Antonio Gramsci to refer to the predominant organizational form of power and domination across the economic, political, cultural and ideological do­mains of a society, or across societies.

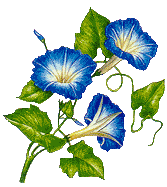
**Linguistic relativity principle:** A hypothesis advanced by the lin­guists Edward Sapir and Benjamin Whorf, according to which different languages offer different ways of perceiving and expressing the world around us, thus leading their speakers to conceive of the world in different ways.

**Sapir-Whorf hypothesis:** The linguistic relativity hypothesis ad­vanced by linguists Edward Sapir and Benjamin Whorf.

**Chapter 2**

**Meaning as Sign**

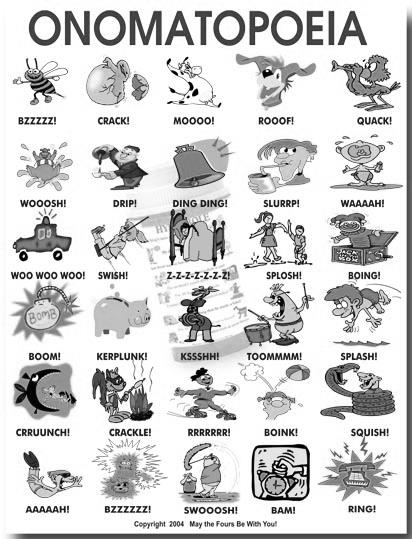
***🗨 The Linguistic Sign = Signifier + Signified:***

The crucial feature that distinguishes humans from animals is humans' capacity to create **signs** that mediate between them and their environment. Every meaning-making practice makes use of two elements: a signifier and a signified. Thus, for example, the sound /rouz/ or the four letters of the word 'rose' are signifiers for a concept related to an object in the real world with a thorny stem and many petals. The signifier (sound or word) in itself is not a sign unless someone recognizes it as such and relates it to a signified (concept); for example, for someone who doesn't know English, the sound /rouz/ signifies nothing because it is not a sign, but only a meaningless sound. A sign is therefore neither the word itself nor the object it refers to but the relation between the two. There is nothing necessary about the relation between a given word as linguistic signifier and a signified object. The word 'rose' can be related to flowers of various shapes, consistencies, colors, and smells. The linguistic sign has been called **arbitrary**.

***🗨 The Meaning of Signs:***

**(A) Denotative:** What is the nature of the relation between signifier and signified? In other words, how do signs “mean”? When Emily Dickinson uses in her poem words like 'rose', or 'rosemary', these words point to (are the **referents** of) objects that grow in the real gardens of the real world. They refer to a definable reality. Their meaning, that can be looked up in the dictionary, is **denotative**.

**(B) Connotative:** On the other hand, the meaning of 'rose' and 'rosemary' is more than just the plants they refer to. It is linked to the many associations they evoke in the minds of their readers: a rose might be associated with love, passion, beauty; rosemary might be associated with the fragrance of summer and the preservation of dried herbs. Both words draw their meaning from their **connotations**. **🎬**

**(C) Iconic:** Signs can also be images (or **icons**) of them. So, for example, exclamations like 'Whoops!', 'Wow!', 'Whack!' don't so much refer to emotions or actions as they imitate them (onomatopoeia). Their meaning is therefore **iconic**. The Dickin­son poem makes full use of iconic meanings. For example, the sound link between the /s/ of 'screw', 'summer', and 'ceaseless rosemary' creates a world of sound signs that replicates the crushing sound of a rose press.

|  |  |
| --- | --- |
| **hache** | ax |
| **tache** | Ink/stain |
| **crache** | same looking |
| **sache** | know |
| **cache** | Hiding place |
| **vache** | cow |

For example, English speakers who belong to certain discourse communities may intensify denotative meanings by iconically elongating the vowel of a word, for example, 'It's beau::::::tiful!'. In French, intensifica­tion of the sound is often done not through elongation of the vowel but through rapid reiteration of the same form: 'Vite vite vite vite vite! Depechez-vous!' (Quick! Hurry up!). These differ­ent prosodic encodings form distinct ways of speaking that are often viewed as typically English or French. Similarly, onomato­poeia links objects and sounds in seemingly inevitable ways for members of a given culture. For example, the English sounds 'bash', 'mash', 'smash', 'crash', 'dash', 'lash', 'clash', 'trash', 'splash', 'flash' are for English speakers icons for sudden, violent movements or actions. A speaker of another language might not hear in the sound /aej/ any such icon at all; for a French speaker the words hache, tache, crache, sache, cache, vache have no semantic relationship despite similar final sounds.

***🗨 Cultural encodings:***

1. ****Different signs denote reality by cutting it up in different ways, as Whorf would say. For example the English sign 'table' denotes all tables, Polish encodes dining tables as *stol*, coffee tables or telephone tables as *stolik.*
2. Cultural encodings can also change over time in the same language. For example, German that used to encode a state of happiness as *gliicklich*, now encodes deep happiness as *gliicklich*, superficial happiness as *happy*, pronounced /hepi/.
3. The encoding of experience differs also in the nature of the cultural associations evoked by different linguistic signs. For example, although the words 'soul' or 'mind' are usually seen as the English equivalents of the Russian word *dusha* [روح], each of these signs is differently associated with their respective objects. For a Russian, not only is *dusha* used more frequently than 'soul' or 'mind' in English, but through its associations with religion, goodness, and the mystical essence of things it connotes quite a different concept than the English. But even within the same **speech community**, signs might have different semantic values for people from different **discourse communities**. **🎬** Anglophone readers of Emily Dickinson's poem who happen not to be members of her special discourse community, might not know the denotational meaning of the word 'Attar', nor associate 'rosemary' with the dead. Nor might the iconic aspects of the poem be evident to them. Even though they may be native speakers of English, their **cultural literacy** is different from that of Emily Dickinson's intended readers.

***🗨 How Semantic Cohesion is Established in a Particular Language:***

**(A) Cohesive Devices:** Beyond individual nouns and sounds, words refer to other words by a variety of **cohesive devices** that hold a text like the Dickinson poem together. These devices capitalize on the associa­tive meanings or shared connotations of a particular community of competent readers who readily recognize the referents whereas a community of less competent readers might not. Examples:

*Essential Oils - are wrung –*

*The Attar from the Rose*

*Be not expressed by Suns - alone –*

*It is the gift of Screws -*

*The General Rose - decay – But this - in Lady's Drawer Make Summer - When the Lady lie In Ceaseless Rosemary -*

\* pronouns ('it'),

\* demonstratives ('this'),

\* repetition of the same words from one sentence to the next (for example, 'The Attar from the Rose ... The general Rose ... In ceaseless Rosemary') or

\* repetition of the same sounds from one line to the next (for example, the sound /I/ in 'Lady's Drawer', 'the Lady lie'),

\* recurrence of words that relate to the same idea (for example, 'Suns', 'summer'; 'essential Oils', 'Attar'),

\* conjunctions (for example, 'but', 'when').

**(B) Prior Text:** A sign or word may also relate to the other words and instances of text and talk that have accumulated in a community's memory over time. Thus, to return, for example, to the Russian sign *dusha*, which roughly denotes 'a person's inner core', it connotes goodness and truth because it is linked to other utterances spoken and heard in daily life, to literary quotes (for example, 'His soul overflowing with rapture, he yearned for freedom, space, openness' written by Dostoevsky), or to other verbal concepts such as pricelessness, human will, inner speech, knowledge, feelings, thoughts, religion, that themselves have a variety of connotations. When English speakers translate the word *dusha* by the word 'soul', they are in fact linking it to other English words, i.e. 'disembodied spirit', 'immortal self', 'emo­tions', that approximate but don't quite match the semantic **cohesion** established for *dusha* in the Russian culture.

**(C) Metaphors:** Another linguistic environment within which words carry cultural semantic meaning consists of the **metaphors** that have accumulated over time in a community's store of semantic knowledge. Thus, for example, the English word 'argument' is often encountered in the vicinity of words like 'to defend' (as in 'Your claims are indefensible'), 'to shoot down' (as in 'He shot down all of my arguments'), 'on target' (as in 'Her criticisms were right on target'), which has led George Lakoff to identify one of the key metaphors of the English language: 'Argument is War'. **🎬** Some of these metaphors are inscribed in the very structure of the English code, for example, the metaphor of the visual field as container. This metaphor delineates what is inside it, outside it, comes into it, as in 'The ship is *coming into* view', 'I have him *in* sight', 'He's *out* of sight now'. Each language has its own metaphors that provide semantic cohesion within its boundaries.

***🗨 The “Non-Arbitrary” Nature of Signs:***

We said at the beginning that signs have no natural connection with the outside world and are therefore arbitrary. Native speakers do not feel in their body that words are arbitrary signs. For them, words are part of the natural, physical fabric of their lives. Seen from the perspective of the user, words and thoughts are one. For example, anyone brought up in a French household will swear that there is a certain natural masculinity about the sun (***le*** soleil) and femininity about the moon ***(la*** lune) [As in Arabic "يا قمر"].

For English speakers, it is perfectly natural to speak of 'shooting down someone's argument'; they don't even think one could talk of arguments in a different way.

The major reason for this naturalization of culturally created signs is their motivated nature. Linguistic signs do not signify in a social vacuum. Sign-making and sign-interpreting practices are **motivated** by the need and desire of language users to influence people, act upon them or even only to make sense of the world around them. With the desire to communicate a certain meaning to others comes also the desire to be listened to, to be taken seriously, to be believed, and to influence in turn other peoples' beliefs and actions. The linguistic sign is therefore a motivated sign; a technically arbitrary / “non-arbitrary” sign.

***🗨 Symbols:***

With the passing of time, signs easily become not only nat­uralized, but conventionalized symbols as well. Taken out of their original social and historical context, linguistic signs can be emptied of the fullness of their meaning and used as symbolic shorthand. For example, words like 'democracy', 'freedom', 'choice', when uttered by politicians and diplomats, may lose much of their denotative and even their rich connotative meanings, and become political **symbols** in Western democratic rhetoric. The recurrence of these symbols over time creates an accumulation of meaning that not only shapes the memory of sign users but stresses these symbols mythical weight and validity. [For example, the signs “warm” and “affection”] **🎬**

***🗨 Stereotypes:***

A **stereotype** is a frozen sign of a specific group of people or objects whose beliefs, habits, and realities often disagree with the imposed image since they assign a limited number of characteristics to all members of a group. They usually negatively affect both those who use them and those whom they serve to characterize.🎬

**Examples:**

**🏶 Age:** "All American teenagers love rock and roll and have no respect for their elders."

**🏶 Looks:** “All blondes are stupid”

**🏶 Race:** "All Japanese look and think alike."

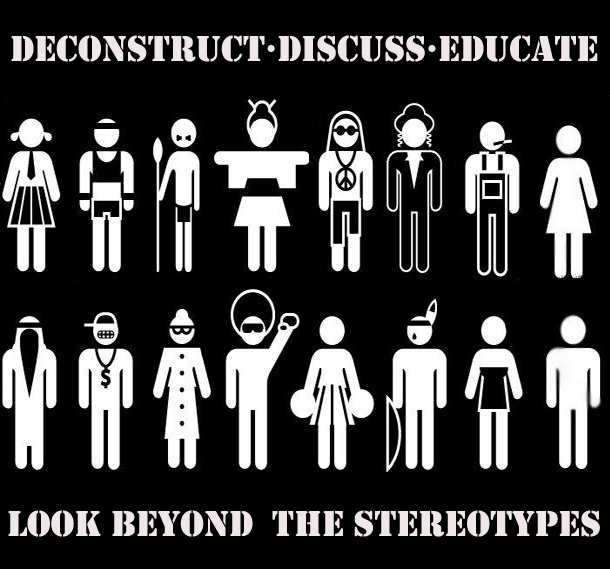
**🏶 Religion:** "All Muslims are terrorists." **🏶 Gender:** "Male chefs are better than female chefs."

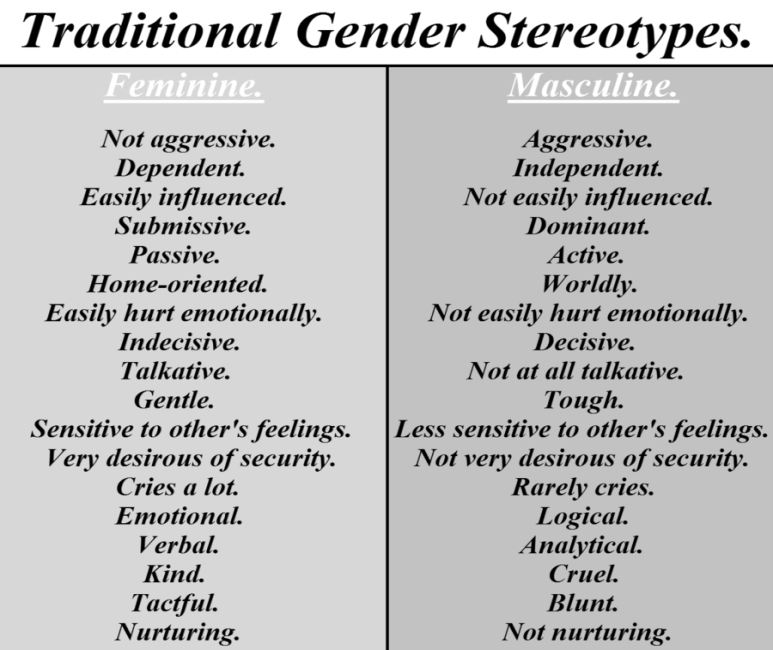
**🏶 Places:** "All cities are corrupt." "Small towns are safe and clean." "In England, it rains all the time." **🏶 Things:** "All American cars are cheaply and ineptly made."

**What stereotypes are usually connected with this image?**

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Gender Stereotypes Woven into Language of Toy Ads:

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**Glossary:**

**Sign:** The relation between a signifier (word or sound) and the signified (image or concept).

**Arbitrariness:** The random nature of the fit between a linguistic sign and the object that it refers to, for example, the word 'rose' does not look like a rose.

**Denotation:** The basic conceptual meaning of a word.

**Connotation:** The associations evoked by a word in the mind of the hearer/reader..

**Iconic:** A meaning of words based on resemblance of words to reality, for example, onomatopoeia ('bash', 'mash')

**Code:** Formal system of communication.

**Encoding:** The translation of experience into a sign or code.

**Cultural literacy:** Term coined by literary scholar E.D.Hirsch to refer to the body of knowledge that is presumably shared by all members of a given culture.

**Co-text:** The linguistic environment in which a word is used within a text.

**Cohesive device:** Linguistic element like a pronoun, demonstra­tive, conjunction, that encodes semantic continuity across a stretch of text.

**Prior text:** One or several texts which a given text explicitly cites, refers to, or builds upon, or which it implicitly harks back to, evokes, or in some way incorporates.

**Metaphor:** Not only a device of the poetic imagination and the rhetorical flourish, metaphor is a property of our conceptual system, a way of using language that structures how we perceive things, how we think, and what we do.

**Symbol:** Conventionalized sign that has been endowed with special meaning by the members of a given culture.

**Stereotype:** Conventionalized ways of talking and thinking about other people and cultures.