Mouloud Mammeri University of Tizi-Ouzou
Faculty of Letters and Languages
Department of English

Linguistic Theory: A Practical Course for Fresher MA Students

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Contents

Introduction

The present course is designed to fulfil the requirements for the application for professorship at Mouloud Mammeri University. It is submitted to the Scientific Committee of the Department of English for approval. Once assessed by reviewers and approved, the course is put on the shelves of the library of the Department for students and teachers to consult. This course is based on the teachings of the subject entitled "Linguistic Theory", delivered in the form of lectures and tutorials to first-year MA students enrolled in the programme *Language and Communication*. Three hours per week are devoted to the teaching of the contents of this course within a two-semester period. The forthcoming paragraphs provide the description of the course and target audience along with its objectives and learning outcomes.

Course Description

Linguistic Theory: A Practical Course for Fresher MA Students is a yearly course designed to introduce key linguistic theories to first year MA students. The course book comprises ten chapters/lectures. Each chapter/lecture of the course begins with an introduction providing the contents and objectives of the lecture and ends with a list of references and some suggested further reading. This then is followed by some practice meant to students to carry out within the tutorial sessions to consolidate their comprehension of the contents of the delivered lecture. An appendix is supplied at the end of the book, which includes a sample of evaluation prototypes.

Course Objectives

The aim of this course is to equip first year MA students with the fundamentals of linguistic theory, foster their comprehension of the emergence of linguistics as a science, and gain knowledge of the later developments in linguistic theory focusing on the contribution of each theory to linguistics and its drawbacks. The main objectives set for this course are summarised as follows:

- help students understand the historical perspectives of linguistic theory
- help them attain a clear picture of the various disciplines featuring linguistic theory pertaining to phonetics, phonology, syntax, semantics, pragmatics, cognitive linguistics, etc.
- allow students to comprehend the development of linguistic theory within the varied schools of linguistics around the world.
- make students know, describe, and use linguistic concepts appropriately
- help students gain expertise in the application of linguistic principles in future scientific research
- reinforce learners' awareness of the importance of linguistic theory as a subject in the programme

Target Audience

As aforementioned, the target audience for this course includes first year MA students preparing a master's degree in the specialty *Language and Communication* in English as a Foreign Language, at the Department of English in the Faculty of Letters and Languages, in Mouloud Mammeri University of Tizi-Ouzou. Furthermore, the course can be useful to EFL practitioners and teachers of linguistics.

Learning Outcomes

Upon completing this course on linguistic theory, students are expected to be able to:

- understand the historical standpoints within linguistic theory
- know the different approaches or perspectives to the study of language and linguistics
- account for and discuss the central perspectives of the different theories of linguistics
- distinguish between the contents and aims of the theories suggested by different scholars
- know, describe, and use linguistic concepts appropriately
- conduct discussions in different areas of linguistics: phonology, grammar, syntax, semantics, pragmatics, cognitive linguistics, among others
- know and explain linguistic concepts and language use
- describe and analyse language with regard to linguistic theories

Course Outline

Lecture One

Historical Survey of the Development of Linguistics

1. Introduction

This first lecture provides a historical survey of the development of linguistics as a science. One of the objectives of this survey is to allow students to have an overall picture of historical linguistics, traditional grammar, philology, and comparative philology. Another objective is to make them comprehend the reasons that have led to the emergence of linguistics as a science independent from other disciplines. The history of linguistics as a science knew three important periods (see Lyons 1968).

2. Traditional Grammar

Traditional grammar goes back to Greece of the fifth century before Christ. For the Greeks 'grammar' was from the first a part of philosophy. That is to say, it was a part of their general inquiry into the nature of the world around them and of their own social institutions. Therefore, instituted by the Greeks, traditional grammar was mainly based on logic. The Greek philosophers discussed whether language was governed by nature or convention. This opposition of nature and convention was characteristic of Greek philosophical speculation that dominated all assumptions about the origin of language and the relationship between words and their meaning. Most importantly, the distinction between descriptive and prescriptive (or normative) grammar was not clearly drawn. In other words, the distinction between describing how people actually speak and write and prescribing how they ought to speak and write was not settled. Traditional grammar offered no scientific or objective study of language. Grammar aimed at providing rules that distinguish correct form incorrect forms. It was rather prescriptive: the 18th and 19th grammarians wished to prescribe rather describe the rules of grammar. They considered language dynamic and thus changing constantly. Prescriptivists were more concerned with the language than its users. If sentences are incorrect, this is not because of the language but because of the speakers' use of it.

The Limitations of Traditional Grammar can be summarised as follows:

- No distinction was made between descriptive and prescriptive grammar.
- Supremacy was given to the written language over the spoken.
- Grammar was based on logic, philosophy, and metaphysics.
- The study of language was subjective instead of being objective.
- The definition of parts of speech (nouns, verbs, adjectives...) was not precise. For example, a noun is defined as the name of a person, animal, or thing. This definition does not account for abstract nouns like "beauty".

- Grammar was considered universal. This view did not take into consideration the fact that linguistic structures differ from one language to another.
  The study of language was based on historical considerations.

3. Philology

Philology inspired the most advanced humanistic studies in the United States and the United Kingdom in the decades before 1850 and sent its generative currents through the intellectual life of Europe and America. According to Turner (2014), the word 'philology' in the nineteenth century covered three distinct ways of research:

(1) **textual philology** including classical and biblical studies, oriental literatures such as those in Sanskrit and Arabic, and medieval and modern European writings;

(2) **theories of the origin and nature of language**; and

(3) **comparative study** of the structure and historical evolution of languages and language families.

Philology was mainly concerned with textual criticism and literary scholarship. This term was mainly applied to the scientific movement introduced by Friedrich August Wolf in 1777. However, linguistic structure was not the central concern of philology. Its concern was to interpret and comment on texts. Philology applied the method of criticism and proceeded to the comparison of texts at different periods and established the characteristics of each writer. Philology paved the way to historical linguistics. It gave priority to written language over the spoken.

4. Comparative Philology

In a work entitled "The Sanskrit Conjugation System" (1816), Franz Bopp studied the connexions between Sanskrit, Germanic, Greek, Latin, and so on. For him, these languages belonged to the same family. The forms of one language were explained with reference to another related language. In the 18th century, the comparison of groups of languages in a systematic way established the descent from Latin of Catalan, French, Occitan, Portuguese, Romanian, Sardinian, Spanish, and so on. In the 19th century, Proto-Indo-European was deemed the hypothetical common ancestor of many languages from Eurasia.

The Comparative Method

The standard way of demonstrating the genetic relatedness of languages is by means of the *comparative method*. This method is a way of comparing a series of languages in order to prove a historical relationship between them. Scholars start by defining a set of formal similarities and differences between the languages and try to work out (or reconstruct) an earlier stage of development from which all the forms could have derived. The process is known as "Internal reconstruction". When languages have been shown to have a common ancestor, they are said to be "cognates". The clearest cases are those where the parent language is known to exist. For example, on the basis of the various words for "*father*",

in the Romance languages, it is possible to see how they all derived from the Latin word for "*pater*" If Latin no longer existed, it would be possible to reconstruct a great deal of its form by comparing a large number of words in this way. The same method is used for cases where the parent language does not exist, as when the forms of Latin, Greek and Sanskrit are compared to reconstruct the Indo-European form **peter*.

Table 1 below shows the comparison of some related words (from Latin and three of the Romance languages: French, Italian and Spanish.

Table 1: Some systematic correspondences of form in Latin and three Romance languages

(Lyons 1981: 193)

		Latin (L)	French (Fr)	Italian (It)	Spanish (Sp)
(1)	"thing"	causa	chose	cosa	cosa
	"head"	caput	chef	capo	cabo
	"horse"	caballus	cheval	cavallo	caballo
	"sing"	cantare	chanter	cantare	cantar
	"dog"	canis	chien	cane	
	"goat"	capra	chèvre	capra	cabra
(2)	"plant"	planta	plante	pianta	llanta
	"key"	clavis	clef	chiave	llave
	"rain"	pluvia	pluie	pioggia	lluvia
(3)	"eight"	octo	huit	otto	ocho
	"night"	nox/noctis	nuit	notte	noche
	"fact"	factum	fait	fatto	hecho
	"milk"	lacte	lait	latte	leche
(4)	"daughter"	filia	fille	figlia	hija
	"beautiful"	formosus			hermoso

A weakness of comparative philology was that comparative philologists' investigations were limited to the Indo-European language and their comparative grammar was exclusively comparative.

5. The Neogrammarians

Short afterwards a new school arose, the *Neogrammarians* whose leading figures were all Germans: K. Brugman, H. Osthoff, W. Paul, and others. The achievement of the *Neogrammarians* was to place all the results of comparative philology in a historical perspective so that linguistic facts were connected in their natural sequence. The *Neogrammarians* no longer looked upon a language as an organism developing of its own accord, but saw it as a product of the collective mind of a linguistic community.

At the same time, there emerged a realisation of the errors and inadequacies of the concepts associated with philology and comparative grammar. However, great as were the advances made by the *Neogrammarians*, it cannot be said that they shed light upon the fundamental problems of general linguistics, which still await a solution today.

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Practice Question

How did the study of language evolve from traditional grammar to modern scientific linguistics? Discuss the major stages in this development.

Lecture Two

Modern Linguistics

1. Introduction

The second lecture of the present course is about modern linguistics. The aim lying behind this second lecture is to describe the outstanding characteristics of modern linguistics as opposed to historical linguistics and traditional grammar. Swiss linguist Ferdinand de Saussure is known to be the founder of modern linguistics. Here are some important features that distinguish modern linguistics as a whole from traditional grammar and historical linguistics.

2. Importance of Spoken Language

The traditional grammarian assumed that spoken language was inferior and in some way dependent upon the standard written language. The contemporary linguist maintains that spoken language is primary and that writing is essentially a means of representing speech in another medium. The principle of the priority of the spoken language over the written implies two things:

- Speech is older and more widespread than writing.
- There is no group of people known to exist without the capacity of speech.

In the description of spoken language, the linguist generally recognizes the existence of units of three different kinds: speech-sounds, syllables and words. No writing system represents all the significant variations of pitch and stress and this is another difference between spoken and written language. So, written language cannot be regarded as the transference of spoken language to another medium.

3. Significance of Descriptive Linguistics

To say that linguistics is a descriptive science means that the linguist tries to discover and record the rules to which the members of a language-community actually conform and does not seek to impose upon them other rules, or norms, of correctness. Nowadays, linguists are insistent about the distinction between descriptive and prescriptive rules because traditional grammar was very strongly normative in nature. The grammarian saw it as his task to formulate the standards of correctness and to impose these, if necessary, upon the speakers of the language. Normative precepts of traditional grammar include such rules as, “You should never use a double- negative” (I didn’t do nothing); “Don’t end a sentence with a preposition” (hat’s the man I was speaking to); “You should not split the infinitive” (as in I want you to clearly understand where clearly is inserted between to and understand).

The linguist’s main task is to describe the way people actually speak and write their language but

not to prescribe the way they ought to speak or write. Thus, linguistics is descriptive not prescriptive. For instance, if someone speaks a dialect different from the standard one, this does not mean that his language is incorrect. Therefore, the linguist must describe this dialect and not prescribe how this speaker ought to speak.

4. Interest in all Languages

Nowadays, most linguists acknowledge that the study of all languages on equal terms is useful. It is sometimes necessary to learn another language and gain knowledge about specialised vocabulary, in order to study a particular subject or communicate with others suitably about it. The linguist's concern with all languages derives from the proclaimed aims of his subject: the construction of a scientific theory of the structure of human language. All recorded and observable instances of language serve as data to be systematised and explained by the general theory.

5. Synchronic Description

An important distinction between diachronic and synchronic study was brought by Saussure. This distinction is drawn by opposing "historical" to "descriptive" study of language. Historical elements must not be considered in synchronic studies. Most twentieth-century linguistic theory is characterised by the principle of the priority of synchronic description, which implies that historical considerations are irrelevant to the investigation of particular temporal states of a language.

The distinction between synchronic and diachronic description must not be understood to imply that time is the determining factor in language change. There are many different factors within a language, or external to language, that can determine its development from one state to another. For instance, the members of different linguistic communities can show differences in pronunciation, grammar and vocabulary. These changes are related to regional dimensions. In addition, there are differences in the language deriving from the existence within the community of various social groups.

6. Structural Approach

The most characteristic feature of modern linguistics is 'structuralism'. This term means that each language is considered a system of relations. That is, a set of interrelated systems, the elements of which (sounds, words, etc.) have no validity independently of the relations of equivalence and contrast which hold between them. The key terms 'system' and 'relation' have already been used in the discussion of Saussure's distinction of the synchronic and diachronic descriptions. Saussure drew this distinction as a result of his belief that every language, at a given time, constitutes an integrated system of relationships. Structural linguistics has been developed to account for the way people actually use language.

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Practice Question

What distinguishes modern linguistics from earlier approaches to language study, and why is it considered a scientific discipline?

Lecture Three

Saussurean Structural Linguistics

1. Introduction

Lecture three is concerned with structural linguistics, or structural linguistic theory introduced by Ferdinand de Saussure. The objective of this lecture is to provide a description of Saussurean structural approach to language and the fundamentals of his linguistic theory that departs from historical linguistics and traditional grammar.

2. Saussurean Linguistics

The Swiss linguist Ferdinand de Saussure is acknowledged the father of modern linguistics. He did much work in the history of Indo-European, yet he gave up historical linguistics. Saussure's view about language and the study of language were innovative. He rejected the nineteenth-century historical and comparative practices and advocated the description of language at a particular point in time. His most influential contribution to linguistics was the *Cours de Linguistique Générale* (*Course in General Linguistics*) published by some of his students, in 1916, after his death. The book is one of the key publications in linguistics that opened the way to the field of structuralism. An important dimension in the *cours* is the number of dichotomies that it introduces; namely, *langue* vs. *parole*, synchrony vs. diachrony, paradigmatic vs. syntagmatic relations, form vs. substance (*signifié* vs. *signifiant*).

Langue vs. Parole

According to Saussure, language includes three elements: *langue, parole,* and *langage* translated into English as 'language', 'speech' and 'language ability' respectively. *Langue* represents the abstract system of collective rules governing the use of vocabulary, grammar, and sound system of a language. *Parole* denotes the actual, oral, or written performance by an individual, in other words it is the observable manifestation of an individual's linguistic behaviour. *Langage* means the physiological and psychological predispositions to use and produce language. Saussure stressed the fact that linguistic investigations should focus on *langue*. Most importantly, the *langue* vs. *parole* dichotomy represents a significant theoretical foundation of structural linguistics. Saussure was less interested in *langage* and *parole* than in langue, which he considers as the core of linguistic study.

Synchrony vs. Diachrony

In Saussure's view, any language can be studied in two ways. Firstly, we can examine the language in its present day state or how it was at any particular point in time. For instance, an aspect within English syntax can be investigated in contemporary English, or an aspect phonology can be studied in the English of the Renaissance without paying attention to the historical changes in the language. This method is

called synchronic study. Secondly, and alternatively, focus can be on the developments and changes that occurred in a language system through time. For instance, one can explore the features characterising the sound system of old and modern English to discover the developments that occurred. This way, is named diachronic investigation.

Syntagmatic vs. Paradigmatic Relations

Saussurean linguistics is interested in the rules governing the use and organisation of signs. These linguistic conventional organisations are expressed through syntagmatic and paradigmatic relations, which enable language to convey meaningful messages by organising and sequencing speech-sounds and linguistic signs. Syntagmatic relationships refer to the rules governing the linear sequencing of sounds and words in a sentence to create meaning. For instance, the sequencing of the words *the, mouse, is, in, the, hole* in the complete sentence *The mouse is in the hole*. Paradigmatic relationships concern the link between words in the sentence and others non-existent in the sentence but having the same function, and which can substitute each other. For instance, the word *mouse* and *spider* hold a paradigmatic relationship because they can substitute one another in the sentence.

Form vs. Substance (*signifiant* vs. *signifié*)

Form and substance constitute two significant elements within Saussurean theory of the linguistic sign. Substance has no existence independently of form. A relevant example is that of a block of marble that is shapeless. A sculptor gives form to it by carving a statute. The same goes for language. However, language results from the imposition of form upon two kinds of substance:

- The substance of sound
- The substance of thought

On the one hand, the phonological arrangement of a word is what Saussure calls the *signifiant* (signifier, i.e., that which signifies). It derives its structure from the imposition of form by language upon the continuum substance of sound. On the other hand, the meaning of a word is what Saussure identifies as the *signifié* (the signified, i.e., its sense). It drives its existence from the imposition of structure upon the nebulous and inchoate continuum substance of thought. Word-forms and meanings have no existence outside the particular language in which they are used. The combination of a given *signifiant* (word-form) with a certain *signifié* (meaning) yields a linguistic sign. Saussure sees *Langue as* a body of *signes* (signs) that are essentially related to sets of meanings or associations and not to particular things. For instance, the word ‘bird’ does not refer to a specific element in the real world but rather to a conceptual image and connotation existing in speakers’ mind while using the word. The connection between the *signifiant* and *signifié* is arbitrary. The words ‘bird’, ‘*oiseau*’, and ‘*pájaro*’ refer to an animal having wings and feathers in English, French, and Spanish, but there is no direct relation between the sounds of

each word and the meaning (for more details about Saussure's dichotomies, see Crystal 1971; Lyons 1973).

Arbitrariness of the Linguistic Sign

Saussure claimed that signs are essentially linked to clusters of meanings or associations and not to specific things in the external world. For example, the word 'house' does not refer to a specific object in the world but rather to a concept involving images and associations that speakers have in mind when they say or write the word. Furthermore, the connection between the series of sounds (the *signifiant*) and the cluster of images and emotions (the *signifié*) is arbitrary. This means that the words 'girl', 'Mädchen', and 'niña' all refer to a female child, but there is no direct connection between the sounds of each word and the meaning, although individuals form a strong connection between sounds and meaning in their minds.

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Practice Question

Explain Saussure's distinction between *langue* and *parole*. Why is this distinction central to structural linguistics?

Lecture Four

Schools of Structural Linguistics in Europe

1. Introduction

This fourth lecture introduces to the students the different schools of linguistics that came after Saussure, and which were influenced by his linguistic theory. One objective of this lecture is to help students refine their knowledge about the works conducted within the Prague school of linguistics and the significance of the theories proposed by the Praguean scholars to the science of linguistics. Other objectives include enhancing their background knowledge about the theories introduced within the school of Paris and that of Copenhagen. In addition, the contents of the lecture aim to show the students that European schools are characterised by the feature of being structuralist and functionalist at once.

2. Prague School of Linguistics

Prague School is the name given to the visions and approaches of the Linguistic Circle of Prague and the scholars it influenced. The school was set up in 1926 by Vilém Mathesius, and included famous linguists as Roman Jakobson and Nikolai Trubetskoy. The influence of the school has been widespread. Its focus was the analysis of language as a system of functionally related units. This revealed Saussurean influence. Interestingly, Roman Jakobson and other members of the Prague School of Linguistics were inspired by Saussure as they investigated sound systems and developed theories of phonetics and phonology. The analysis particularly led to the distinction between the phonetic and the phonological analysis of sounds, the analysis of the phoneme into distinctive features, and notions as binarity, marking and morphophonemics. Since the 1950s, the ideas introduced within the Prague School have been developed, in the fields of syntax, semantics, and stylistics of English.

2.1 Jakobson's Model of Communication

Roman Jakobson was born in Russia, but moved to the United States. He was the major founder of the Prague School. His work in phonology was a breakthrough in structural and functional linguistics and influenced many other famous linguists such as Benjamin Lee Whorf and Leonard Bloomfield. He developed innovative techniques for the analysis of linguistic sound systems and introduced the theory of distinctive features. Jakobson published a paper on the six functions of communication in 1960. It became one of his most prominent publications. He distinguished six components, or factors of communication that are requisite for communication. These factors include: (i) addresser (sender of the message), (ii) addressee (receiver of the message), (iii) context (the setting or the reason for the message), (iv) contact (relational link, or channel between the addresser and the addressee), (v) common code (e.g.

language, or any rules of combination used to form the message), and (vi) message (the content that is sent by the addresser).

2.2 Jakobson's Six Language Functions

Jakobson's theory of communication comprises six functions. Each of the abovementioned factors is associated with a *function* that operates between the message and the factor. The functions reveal a person's purpose of using language.

Factor	**Function**
addresser	emotive/ expressive
addressee	conative/directive
context	referential/informative
contact	phatic
code	metalinguistic
message	poetic/aesthetic

Emotive/expressive Function

The expressive function relates to the state of mind of the addresser who uses language to express his/her feelings. This function allows the interpretation of emotions, feelings, desires, and temperaments of the addresser. The emotive function provides information about the sender's attitude. Focus is on the personal expression of feelings, attitudes, and opinions. Examples of expressive texts include autobiographies, personal correspondences, and political speeches.

Referential/Informative Function

The informative function of language is linked to the external situation, the facts of a topic, ideas, or theories. This is the language used to convey information in an objective way. Informative texts provide information about any topic of knowledge. The style used is impersonal, objective, formal, and non-emotive. Examples of informative texts comprise textbooks, technical reports, scientific papers, theses, proceedings, or outline of a meeting, newspaper article. These texts relate to such fields as science, technology, commerce, or various areas of knowledge.

Conative/Vocative/Directive Function

The conative function focuses on the addressee (the audience/reader/hearer). The language used aims to capture the attention of or get a reaction from the addressee. That is, language is used to call upon the audience to act, think and feel, or react in the way intended by the text. The sender of the message wants to produce a certain effect on the addressee. The aim is to convince or persuade the hearers/readers.

Examples of texts showing this function are instructions, advertisements, propaganda, requests, and theses expressed in clear language. These texts are characterised by the use of such forms as pronouns, infinitives, imperatives, etc. indicating the relationship between the addresser and addressee. According to Newmark (1988: 42) "Few texts are purely expressive, informative, or vocative: most include all 3 functions, with an emphasis on one of the three […] a text can hardly be purely informative, i.e., objective. An expressive text will usually carry information".

Phatic/Interactional Function

The phatic function is used to establish a connection. This type of language is not meant to communicate any meaningful information, but is used to start or stop a conversation or to check the connection between the addresser and audience. In short, it is language used to establish or maintain contact between the addresser and the addressee, as for example, the use of 'phaticisms' or standard phrases in spoken language, e.g., *Hey, you… May I have your attention? How are you? Have a good weekend! See you tomorrow. Did you have a good Christmas? Isn't it hot today?* In written language, examples include: *of course, naturally, it is important to note that…*

Metalinguistic Function

Metalinguistic means talking about language itself. In other words, language is used to explain itself. This function shows up in questions or explanations of terminology, giving word definitions, clarifying ambiguity, and describing deliberate word play or phaseology. For example, *what do you mean by cleft structure*?, *literally*, *so-called*, *sometimes known as*, etc. serve this function. The metalinguistic function also applies to translation when foreign words are used to give special meaning or emphasis.

Poetic/aesthetic Function

This function focuses on the message as well as the way the message is communicated, as Jakobson (1960: 356) states, "the focus on the message for its own sake". Language is used in a creative way. The message can be embellished with rhetorical figures of speech. Rhymes, similes, and metaphors are used to embellish the text. The poetic function characterises quotations and colloquial sayings.

2.3 Jakobson's Distinctive Features Theory

Distinctive features theory was introduced by Roman Jakobson in, 1941. It is one of the most substantial contributions to phonology. There have been several modifications to Jakobson's (1941) set of features since that date (see Jakobson & Halle 1956; Chomsky & Halle 1968). Distinctive features represent the smallest units characterising phonemes whose function is to allow a distinction between the phonemes of a given language and identification of the features shared by different phonemes. Jakobson's

articulation of distinctive features theory was based on some major principles. Firstly, all features are privative or binary. That is, a phoneme either has a feature, marked with a (+) sign or lacks it, marked with a (–), eg., the phoneme /b/ has the feature [+VOICE] while /p/ does not [–VOICE]. Secondly, there is a difference between phonetic and phonological features. Distinctive features are phonological while phonetic features are surface realisations of underlying phonological features. For instance, a phonological feature may be realised by more than one phonetic feature as is the case with [flat] which is a feature realised by labialisation, velarisation and pharyngealisation all at once. Thirdly, a small set of features can distinguish between the phonemes of one particular language. Finally, distinctive features may be defined in terms of articulatory or acoustic features. However, Jakobson's features are primarily laid on acoustic considerations. Here are some relevant examples of features: [grave] is an acoustic feature referring to the concentration of low frequency energy, [acute] is an acoustic feature indicating concentration of high frequency energy, and [high] is an articulatory feature related to tongue height, which can also be defined acoustically.

Notably, using distinctive features, we can break down phonemes into smaller components and therefore identify them in terms of their constitutive phonetic features. In this way, the phoneme /m/, for example, can be represented as a feature *matrix* [+sonorant, –continuant, + voiced, + nasal, + labial].

2.4 Distinctive Features Matrix

Table 2. below shows the distinctive features matrix for vowels.

Table 2 : Distinctive features of some English phonemes (see Chomsky and Halle 1968)

	i	u	e	ɑ	ɪ	w	r	l	p	t	d	θ	ð	n	s	z	ʃ	k	h
Syllabic	+	+	+	+	+	−	−	−	−	−	−	−	−	−	−	−	−	−	−
Consonantal	−	−	−	−	−	−	+	+	+	+	+	+	+	+	+	+	+	+	−
High	+	+	−	−	+	+	−	−	−	−	−	−	−	−	−	−	+	+	−
Back	−	+	−	+	−	+	−	−	−	−	−	−	−	−	−	−	−	+	−
Low	−	−	−	+	−	−	−	−	−	−	−	−	−	−	−	−	−	−	+
Anterior	−	−	−	−	−	−	−	+	+	+	+	+	+	+	+	+	−	−	−
Coronal	−	−	−	−	−	−	+	+	−	+	+	+	+	+	+	+	+	−	−
Round	−	+	−	−	−	+													
Tense	+	+	+	+	−	−													
Voice							+	+	−	−	+	−	+	+	−	+	−	−	−
Continuant							+	+	−	−	−	+	+	−	+	+	+	−	+
Nasal							−	−	−	−	−	−	−	+	−	−	−	−	−
Strident							−	−	−	−	−	−	−	−	+	+	+	−	−
Lateral							−	+	−	−	−	−	−	−	−	−	−	−	−

2.5 Trubetzkoy's Theory of Binary Oppositions

Nikolai Trubetzkoy was a central member of the Prague school of linguistics, which was highly influential in developing some areas of linguistic theory including phonology, in the 1930s. His most influential work was published in 1939, shortly after his death. Most importantly, Trubetzkoy emphasised distinctive oppositions – those showing phonological contrast. These are either privative (a marked feature is present or absent), or equipollent (both members are of equal status), or gradual

(characterised by several gradations of one property). In sum, Trubetzkoy worked out different types of phonological oppositions. These oppositions are based on phonetic or phonological features. For the purpose of the present course, only some of the types of phonological oppositions are introduced, i.e., the types of opposition relating to the definition of phonological features.

Bilateral oppositions

A bilateral opposition represents a pair of sounds that share a set of features which no other sound shares fully, for example, voiceless labial obstruents /p/ and /f/. Obstruents (stops and fricatives) have a higher degree of stricture than that of approximants.

Multilateral oppositions

This opposition refers to a group of more than 2 sounds which share common features. For example, labial obstruents, /p,b,f,v/ share two features; they are labial and obstruent.

Privative (binary) oppositions

This is when one member of a pair of sounds possesses a mark, or a feature, which the other member lacks. Such features are also known as binary features, which a sound either possesses or lacks, such as Voicing. A sound is voiced or not voiced. The sound which possesses the feature is said to be marked [+voice] whilst the sound lacking the feature is unmarked [–voice].

Gradual oppositions

This is when members of a class of sounds possess different degrees or gradations of a feature or property. For example, the three short front unrounded English vowels /ɪ, e, æ/ are distinguished by their height. Therefore, /ɪ/ and /e/ can be said to be in gradual opposition. In this case, height represents a single feature with two or more degrees of height.

Equipollent oppositions

In this case, the relationship between two members of an opposition are considered to be logically equivalent. The difference between them is not due to a privative or gradual opposition. Consonant place of articulation can be seen in this sense. Changes in the place of articulation involve not just degree of fronting but involve other articulator changes as well. For example, [bilabial] involves two lips, [labiodental] involves the bottom lip and the top teeth, [dental] involves the tongue tip and the teeth, [alveolar] involves the tongue tip and the alveolar ridge, and [velar] involves the back of the tongue and the soft palate.

3. School of Paris

A famous scholar within the school of Paris was André Martinet, a French linguist who achieved much work in both structural and functional linguistics. His research interests were mainly in phonetics and phonology. He was influenced by Saussurean structural linguistics and the works of the Linguistic Circle of Prague. His elaboration of the concept of "opposition" in phonology showed the influence of Saussure's statement",... dans la langue il n'y a que des différences ..." (Saussure 1916: 166). Among Martinet's pertinent publications is *Éléments de Linguistique Générale* (1960) wherein he described his linguistic theory "*la double articulation du langage*" (The double articulation of language)

3.1 Martinet's Theory of Double Articulation

The term *double articulation* was first introduced by André Martinet who used it to refer to the two levels of structure in which language is organized: the stream of speech can be divided into meaningful signs, which can further be subdivided into smaller meaningless elements. A corresponding term in more widespread use is *duality of structure* (see definition by Crystal 2008: 35). To illustrate double articulation let us take the meaningful English word "bat" as an example. The word is composed of the speech-sounds [b], [æ], and [t], which are meaningless separate individual units. These can also be combined to form another word "tab" with a different meaning. These speech-sounds or phonemes constitute the lowest level in the hierarchy of the linguistic system. Higher levels of organisation such as morphology and syntax manage the combination of the individual meaningless phonemes into meaningful elements. The duality of structure wherein a limited number of constituents combine to form other larger utterances represents an important property of human languages.

The first level of articulation in a language consists entirely of morphemes. Some morphemes are complete words, such as "girl" or "boy" while others are what we call bound morphemes such as un- in the word "unhappy". Morphemes are combined together to form words and larger segments or sentences used in actual communication. Phonemes, which are meaningless segments, represent the components of the second level of articulation. Isolated phonemes do not convey meaning, but if put together they make up the meaningful morphemes of the first level of articulation. Every single language contains a limited number of phonemes. English, for instance, includes about 44 distinct phonemes. These when combined from a large number of words, which in turn can indefinitely produce new utterances.

4. Copenhagen School of Linguistics

The Copenhagen School or the Linguistic Circle of Copenhagen included a group of scholars who devoted themselves to linguistic studies. The Danish linguists Louis Hjelmslev and Viggo Brøndal were the founders of the *Linguistic Circle of Copenhagen*, in 1931. Pertinently, Louis Hjelmslev's linguistic theory formed the basis of the Copenhagen School of linguistics. A substantial publication of his is

Prolegomena to a Theory of Language (1943) in which he introduced the theory of glossematics.

4.1 Hjelmslev's Theory of Glossematics

Hjelmslev's theory described in his *Prolegomena to a Theory of Language*, first published, in 1943 and translated into English by Whitfield, in 1961, is built around distinctions, which Saussure has originally articulated: *form* vs. *substance* and *content* vs. *expression*. Hjelmslev developed a simple and rigorous system of concepts and terms to clarify the nature of language, and render more efficient its study. The principal aim of Hjelmslev's semiotic theory of glossematics is to construct a theoretical model for analysing language, which is based on a limited number of determined terms or distinctions, premises and procedural methods. The theoretical aim of Hjelmslev's work leads him to describe the original Saussurean distinctions in an abstract and mathematical way.

Content and Expression

The major Hjelmslevian distinction is that of *content* and *expression*, which was inspired by the Saussurean dichotomy *signifié* vs. *signifiant*. The distinction refers to the two sides of the linguistic sign, as he stated, "the sign is an entity generated by the connexion between an expression and a content" (Hjelmslev 1943/1963: 47). The content and expression sides of language in general are referred to as *planes* (op. cit.: 59). Apart from being characterised as two reciprocal dimensions of the linguistic sign, *content* and *expression*, are not explicitly defined as technical terms in the theory. Hjelmslev (1943/1963: 60) emphasises the fact that these two concepts can only be defined in relation to one another, as he clearly claimed:

> The terms *expression plane* and *content plane* and, for that matter, *expression* and *content* are chosen in conformity with established notions and are quite arbitrary. Their functional definition provides no justification for calling one, and not the other, of these entities *expression*, or one, and not the other, *content*. They are defined only by their mutual solidarity, and neither of them can be identified otherwise. They are each defined only oppositively and relatively, as mutually opposed functives of one and the same function.

Hjelmslev takes up Saussurean notions of *substance* and *form* and reformulates them in terms of planes; namely, the *plane of the expression* and the *plane of the content*. Both planes contain a form and a substance. Hence, there will be the substance and the form of the expression, on the one hand, and the substance and the form of the content on the other hand. Hjelmslev calls the substance of the expression *phonetics*, the form of the expression *phonology*, the substance of the content *reality*, and the form of the content *meaning*. While the substances of expression and content are ontologic, the forms of expression and content constitute what Hjelmslev calls the semiosis. In sum, what defines the linguistic sign is the connection between the form of the expression, on the one hand, and the form of the content, on the other. He refers to this connection as the *semiotic function*. This is schematised in Figure 1.

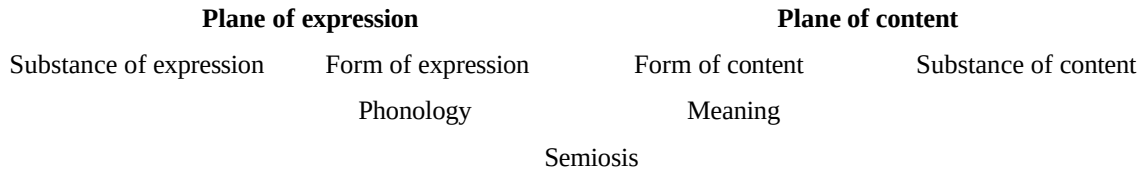

Figure 1. The content-expression distinction

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Practice Question

Compare the main contributions of the Prague School and the Copenhagen School to European structural linguistics.

Lecture Five

Structural Linguistics in the US

1. Introduction

Lecture five consists in a detailed account of the structural approach to language in North America. The objective lying behind this lecture is to present to the students the leading figures of American structuralism and the theories and methods of language analysis characterising their investigations.

2. Preliminary Observations

Saussure's views concerning *langue* and *parole*, as well as his understanding of the purpose and goals of linguistics, have exercised enormous influence not only on linguists in Europe but on those of North America as well. In fact, Franz Boas, Edward Sapir, and Leonard Bloomfield adopted Saussure's method of objective, synchronic language study as the basis for their descriptive analyses of various North American Indian languages. Bloomfield also adopted elements of Saussure's thoughts into his publication *Language* (1933). American and European structuralism shared a number of features. Both emphasised the necessity of treating language as a clear and cohesive system, by adopting a structural approach to the study of language. This fourth lecture sets out as an objective the familiarisation of students with the proponents of American structural linguistics and the linguistic theory that characterised it.

3. Early American Descriptive Structural Linguistics

In America, linguistics emerged out of anthropology, at the beginning of the 20th century. Anthropologists described the culture and languages of the American Indians that were dying. Field methods were used to record and describe the disappearing unwritten Amerindian languages. There were hundreds of indigenous American Indian languages that have never been described before. This urged scholars to explore these languages before they become extinct. The anthropologists did not built a theory to account for the structure of human language but advocated methodological principles for the description and analysis of unknown languages. Three scholars were at the origin of American structuralism: Franz Boas, Edward Sapir, and Leonard Bloomfield.

Franz Boas

Franz Boas in his *Handbook of American Indian Languages* (1911) defined the procedure used in the descriptions and analyses. He discovered that earlier descriptions of Northern American Indian languages have been distorted. This because scholars did not appreciate the diversity of the languages, thus, they imposed the traditional grammatical categories of description upon languages for which they

were inadequate. These categories derived from the analysis of the more familiar Indo-European languages do not characterise all languages. Boas sees that every language has its particular structure, and it is the job of linguistics to explore it using appropriate grammatical categories.

Edward Sapir

Edward Sapir was Boas' pupil. Sapir was also an adept of anthropology and linguistics. He turned to the study of Indian languages. In 1921, he published a book entitled *Language.* Sapir took a humanistic view of language and focused on its cultural importance. He also held the view that language is mainly human instead of being an instinct. Of note, Wilhelm von Humboldt's view of the relationship between language and thought has been so much influential. Under this influence, Sapir together with his pupil Benjamin Lee Whorf introduced the Sapir-Whorf Hypothesis that language determines perception and thought. This hypothesis widely attracted scholarly attention.

Leonard Bloomfield

Leonard Bloomfield was interested in language from a structural descriptive viewpoint. He wanted to make linguistics autonomous and scientific. According to him, the notion of "scientific" means the objective and systematic investigation of observable data only, rejecting analysis of all data that are not directly observable or physically measurable. In 1933, he published a book entitled *Language* wherein he strived to introduce rigorous procedures for the description of any language. In this book, Bloomfield visibly adopted a behaviouristic approach to the study of language putting aside all reference to mental or conceptual categories, as was the case with meaning, to achieve scientific objectivity as he intended it. His analyses of sentences were taxonomic, i.e., they were based on the observation, description, and classification of linguistic units. His adoption of the behaviouristic theory had negative repercussion on semantics, the study of meaning, which was accounted for in terms of a stimulus and a verbal response. Bloomfield avoided basing the grammatical analysis of a language on semantic considerations. Another characteristic feature of Bloomfield's language description is his adoption of field methods, criticized by Chomsky as "discovery procedures", i.e., procedures applied mechanically to texts to produce an appropriate phonological and grammatical description of the language of the texts.

4. Bloomfieldian School of Structural Linguistics

This is the school of thought which developed between the mid-1930s and 1950s, in America, and which was a seminal influence on structural linguistics. It was characterised by its behaviouristic principles for the study of meaning, its insistence on rigorous discovery procedures for establishing linguistic units, and a general concern to make linguistics autonomous and scientific, in a behaviourist sense). A reaction against Bloomfieldian views was a dominant effort in constructing generative grammar. Though this

school is no longer fashionable, some of its methods are still widely used in field studies (see Crystal 2008: 57).

Bloomfield was influenced by Watson's behaviourist approach in psychology. In this approach, the behaviour of any living organism was to be described and explained in terms of the organism's responses to the stimuli characterising the environment. As aforementioned, Bloomfield in his book Language (1933) adopted behaviourism in linguistic description. In his point of view, a particular stimulus leads someone to speak. To illustrate his idea, he gave an example: "Jack and Jill are walking down a lane. Jill sees an apple on a tree, and being hungry, asks Jack to get it for her. He climbs the tree and gives her the apple, and she eats it". A behaviouristic explanation of this would be as follows: Jill's being hungry (i.e., some of her muscles were contracting, and some fluids were being secreted in her stomach) and her seeing the apple (i.e., light waves reflected from the apple reached her eyes) constitute the stimulus. The most direct response to this stimulus would be for Jill to climb the tree and get the apple herself. Instead, she makes a *substitute response* in the form of a particular sequence of noises with her speech organs, and this acts as a *substitute stimulus* for Jack causing him to act as he might have done if he himself had been hungry and had seen the apple.

Bloomfield and his followers were more interested in the forms of linguistic items, and in the way they were arranged, than in meaning (semantics). Meaning, according to Bloomfield, was not observable using firm methods of analysis, and it was therefore "the weak point in language study". The Bloomfieldian School of Structural Linguistics had great influence and lasted for more than 20 years. During that period, linguists focused mostly on writing descriptive grammars of unwritten languages. This involved first, collecting sets of utterances from native speakers of these languages, and second, analysing the corpus of collected data by studying the phonological and syntactic patterns of the language concerned, as far as possible without reference to meaning. Linguistic items were identified and classified solely on the basis of their distribution within the corpus. For American structuralists, the ultimate goal of linguistics was the accuracy of the discovery procedures, i.e., the principles that enabled them to 'discover' in a reliable way the linguistic units of an unwritten language. The Bloomfiedians were described as structuralist linguists because they were interested in

the internal structures (patterns) of language. Their studies were empiricist in nature, corpus-based, purely taxonomic, and focused on Amerindian languages. This was clear in their adoption of Immediate Constituent Analysis (ICA) in the grammatical analysis of sentences.

4.1 ICA: A Model for Sentence Analysis

Bloomfield introduced a model for the grammatical analysis of sentences that he called Immediate Constituent Analysis (ICA). To illustrate how ICA works, he took the sentence *Poor John ran away*. He split it into two immediate constituents (ICs) *Poor John* and *ran away*. These represent the first layer of

analysis. He then analysed these constituents into further ultimate constituents (UCs) representing the second layer of analysis *Poor, John, ran,* and *away.* This type of grammatical analysis can be illustrated in the form of a tree diagram.

4.2 Weaknesses of ICA

ICA was proved very limited and ineffective for the analysis of a number of sentences. The limitations include the following:

- In some sentences, it is not always clear where the cut between constituents is to come, as is the case with "That nice, efficient, old fashioned secretary is here". After the first cut between *secretary* and *is*, it is not clear how further division is to be completed.
- ICA cannot explain the relationship between active and passive sentences like *Tom eats and apple* and A*n apple is eaten by Tom*. ICA would provide two different analysis in this case.
- ICA cannot distinguish superficially identical sentences like *John is eager to please* and *John is easy to please* because it analyses sentences at the surface structure level only.
- ICA is mainly concerned with the identification and classification of constituents, but does not specify the function of these constituents of the sentence.
- The grammatical analyses of sentences were effected with no reference to meaning. Analyses take into account the formal properties of sentences only, and meaning is not integrated in the analyses.
- ICA is unable to clarify ambiguity in sentences, such as, "Flying planes can be dangerous" (see Chomsky 1965: 20). Four interpretations characterise this sentence: was the drinking taking place at midnight or the ordering? Who was drinking, the police, or someone else? In this case, ICA presents one meaning of the sentence and leaves aside the others.

5. Post-Bloomfieldian Linguistics

The post-Bloomfieldian School of linguistics included leading scholars in the US whose investigations dominated linguistic research in the 1940s and 1950s. Prominent members of the school were Zellig Harris, Charles F. Hockett, and George L. Trager. One of the most characteristic features of "post-Bloomfieldian" American structuralism, then, was its almost complete neglect of semantics. In fact, Bloomfield's followers pushed even further the attempt to develop methods of linguistic analysis that were not based on meaning. Post-Bloomfieldian developed distributionalism or what is referred to as taxonomic structuralism.

Zellig Harris was the major figure in the Post-Bloomfieldian period. He presented a laborious study of distributional procedures. In 1951, he published a book entitled *Methods in Structural Linguistics.* Harris was Chomsky's teacher. Most of his ideas have led to the building of the generative grammar theory.

Charles F. Hockett was another central figure in the Post-Bloomfieldian era. The work of Bloomfield had great influence on him. He published an influential work in 1958: *A Course in Modern Linguistics.* **George L. Trager** was a member and president of the Linguistic Society of America, in 1960.

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Practice Question

How did American structuralists such as Leonard Bloomfield approach language analysis, and how did their methods differ from those of European structuralists?

Lecture Six

Chomskyan Linguistics

1. Introduction

Lecture six contains a detailed account of Noam Chomsky's linguistic theory: Generative Grammar, also referred to as Generativism. The objective lying behind this sixth lecture is to introduce to the students the linguistic field of syntax and to allow them to comprehend, on the one hand, Chomsky's reaction to previous Bloomfieldian linguistics and, on the other, the precepts featuring his generative grammar. Another objective is to show to the students how Chomsky reacted to criticism by revising his linguistic theory.

2. Generative Grammar

The term 'generative grammar' was introduced into linguistics by Chomsky in the mid-1950s. A generative grammar generates all and only grammatically well-formed sentences and fails to generate ill-formed sentences. It consists in a set of rules operating upon a finite vocabulary of units to generate a set (finite or infinite) of sentences (each sentence being composed of a finite number of units). The term 'generate', used in the definition, is to be understood in exactly the sense in which it is used in mathematics. To clarify this: given that x can take as its value any one of the natural numbers {1, 2, 3,. . .}, the algebraic formula x2 + x + 1 (which we can think of as a set of rules, or operations) generates the set {3, 7, 13, . . .}. It is in this abstract, or static, sense of the term that the rules of a generative grammar are said to generate the sentences of a language. The important point is that: a generative grammar is a mathematically precise specification of the grammatical structure of the sentences that it generates.

3. Chomsky's Linguistic Theory: Key principles

Chomsky' theory of generative linguistics presented in his publications *Syntactic Structures* (1957) and *Aspects of the Theory of Syntax* (1965) was considered to have developed in reaction to the previously dominant school of post-Bloomfieldian American descriptive structural linguistics. Generative linguistics is characterised by a number of principles:

Language-systems are Productive. This is in the sense that they allow for the construction and comprehension of indefinitely many utterances that have never previously occurred in the experience of any of their users. In fact, from the assumption that human languages have the property of recursiveness – the use of rules repeatedly to generate new sentences - it follows that the set of potential utterances in any given language is quite infinite in number. Chomsky drew attention to this fact, in his criticism of the widely held view that children learn their native language by reproducing the utterances of adult speakers. Apparently, if children are able to produce novel utterances which a competent speaker of the

language will recognise as grammatically well-formed, there must be something other than imitation involved. They must have inferred, learned, or acquired the grammatical rules by virtue of which the utterances that they produce are judged to be well-formed.

Language is Free from Stimulus Control. Chomsky has reacted against the behaviourists' theory of language and wanted to show its limitations. He has demonstrated that ideas of behaviourism ('stimulus', 'response', 'conditioning', 'reinforcement', etc.) cannot be shown to have any relevance to the acquisition and the use of human language. He has shown the consequences of behaviourists' refusal to accept the existence of anything other than observable physical objects and processes. He has asserted that language is free from stimulus-control and advocated the idea of creativity: the utterance that someone produces on any particular occasion is, in principle, unpredictable and cannot be properly described, in the technical sense of these terms, as a response to some identifiable linguistic or non-linguistic stimulus.

Creativity. Creativity is, in Chomsky's view, a human attribute, which distinguishes men from machines, and from other animals. Creativity is rule-governed. The utterances that we produce have a certain grammatical structure: they conform to identifiable rules of well-formedness. The property of language - its productivity - makes creativity possible. Productivity and creativity are in some way interconnected. Our creativity in the use of language - our freedom from stimulus-control - manifests itself within the limits set by the productivity of the language-system. Furthermore, it is Chomsky's view - and this is a very central component in Chomskyan generativism - that the rules, which determine the productivity of human languages have the formal properties that they do have by virtue of the structure of the human mind.

Mentalism. The behaviourists have rejected the distinction that is commonly drawn between body and mind. Chomsky takes the view that it is a valid distinction, and it is his argument that linguistics has an important role to play in the investigation of the nature of the mind. Bloomfield's commitment to behaviourism had little practical effect upon the techniques of linguistic description that he and his followers developed. Chomsky's mentalism surpasses the outdated opposition between the physical (observable) and the non-physical (mental) that Bloomfield raised.

Linguistic universals. There are significant differences between Chomskyan generativism and both Bloomfieldian and post-Bloomfieldian structuralism. One of these concerns their attitudes towards linguistic universals. Bloomfield and his followers emphasized the structural diversity of languages. Generativists, in contrast, are more interested in what languages have in common. In this respect, generativism represents a return to the older tradition of universal grammar - as exemplified by the Port-Royal grammar of 1660 and a large number of eighteenth-century dissertations on language - which both Bloomfield and Saussure described as unscientific. Chomsky's view is different from that of his

precursors who tended to deduce the essential properties of language from what they held to be the universally valid categories of logic or reality. Another difference is that he attaches more importance to the formal properties of languages and to the nature of the rules that their description requires than he does to the relations that hold between language and the world. The reason for this change of emphasis is that Chomsky is looking for evidence to support his view that the human language-faculty is innate and species-specific: i.e. genetically transmitted and unique to the species.

4. Syntactic Structures (1957)

In Syntactic Structures (1957), Chomsky stated that syntax is a completely autonomous part of language, independent of semantics and the phonological system. Furthermore, he asserted that the syntax of a language could be formalised in a mathematically precise way by means of different rules operating on different levels. His theory was revolutionary in two ways. First, it was an attempt to formalise some of the features of language; and, second, Chomsky dissociated himself from the Bloomfieldian approach that a grammatical description of a language can only be derived from the observation and analysis of actually occurring data. Chomsky's (1957:11) view about syntax goes as follows:

> Syntax is the study of the principles and processes by which sentences are constructed in particular languages. Syntactic investigation of a given language has as its goal the construction of a grammar that can be viewed as a device of some sort for producing the sentences of the language under analysis.

4.1 Phrase Structure Grammar

Chomsky (1957) introduced a model for the analysis of sentences. He considered Immediate Constituent Analysis, which he adapted into a system of ordered rule. Phrase-structure rules are re-write rules, which formalise immediate constituent structures of sentences on an abstract level and provides a description of sentences on a structural level. Below are the rules that describe how the sentence *The man hit the ball* is generated.

(i) $Sentence \rightarrow NP + VP$
(ii) $NP \rightarrow T + N$
(iii) $VP \rightarrow Verb + NP$
(iv) $T \rightarrow the$
(v) $N \rightarrow man, ball,$ etc.
(vi) $Verb \rightarrow hit, took,$ etc.

Figure 2: Re-write rules (Chomsky 157: 26)

The rules are applied in the following way: We start from an initial element, which is the sentence, and then use a set of re-write rules to generate the sentence in derivational stages. These rules re-write the symbol that appears on the left of the arrow as the string of symbols on the right of the arrow. The plus sign (+) means that the items are obligatorily linked together. The comma (,) indicates that the symbol on the left can be re-written according to the choice of one of the elements on the right.

Chomsky proposes another system that shows the precise order of the derivational stages until a 'terminal string' is reached where no more rules are possible.

Sentence	
NP + VP	(i)
T + N + VP	(ii)
T + N + Verb + NP	(iii)
the + N + Verb + NP	(iv)
the + man + Verb + NP	(v)
the + man + hit + NP	(vi)
the + man + hit + T + N	(ii)
the + man + hit + the + N	(iv)
the + man + hit + the + ball	(v)

Figure 3: Ordered rules (Chomsky 1957: 27)

The above ordered rules can be represented by a diagram called a *phrase marker* or *tree diagram* wherein the order of sentence derivation is not indicated.

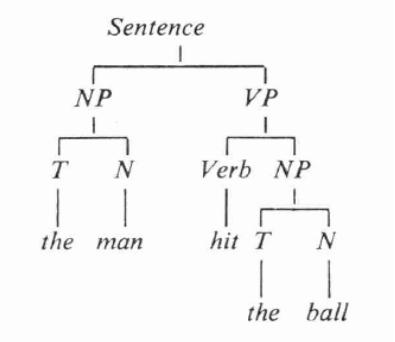


Figure 4: Phrase marker (Chomsky 1957: 27)

4.2 Limitations of Phrase Structure Grammar

Although PSG was proved more satisfactory than finite state grammar, it was found to have weaknesses.

- PSG generates all and only grammatical sentences. Yet, some of these sentences can be meaningless. Consider a) and b):

  a) *The boy took the bag.*

  b) *The bag took the boy.*

  Both a) and b) are grammatical sentences, but only a) is acceptable. This limitation is due to the fact that PS rules are context free. This means that no contextual restrictions are indicated in the application of the rules. For instance, the rule S NP +VP does not specify the type of VP that can co-occur with the NP.

- A further limitation for which PSG is proved inadequate is that it cannot analyse compound sentences, as John reads and listens to music. In addition, it cannot explain the relationship

between active and passive sentences, John borrowed a book and A book was borrowed by John. It cannot distinguish between sentences with similar surface structures, such as *The picture was painted by a new artist* and *The picture was painted by a new technique*.

- Another weakness of PSG is that it cannot account for ambiguity. For instance, it cannot clarify the meaning of the sentence *The shooting of the hunters is terrible* wherein *hunters* can be understood as either the subject, or object of the action of *shooting*.

4.3 Transformational Generative Grammar

Chomsky (1957) rejected linear finite state grammars and showed the limitations of phrase structure grammar, which was an adapted version of immediate constituent analysis. Later, he developed a third type of grammar with a three-party structure that he called Transformational Generative Grammar. It consisted of three levels: (i) phrase-structure rules, (ii) morphophonemic rules that convert sequences of morphemes into sequences of phonemes, and (iii) a level of transformational rules that modify the strings of elements generated by the PS rules into strings that can serve as the input to the morphophonemic rules. The system thus includes a generative component generating the underlying structures and a transformational component modifying them into new surface structures. Transformational Generative Grammar (TGG for short) is believed to be more satisfactory than Finite state grammar, Immediate Constituent Analysis, and Phrase Structure Grammar.

4.3.1 Transformational rules

TGG is based on the idea that there are two types of transformational rules: obligatory and optional.

Obligatory transformational rules

These rules when applied on kernel (simple) sentences generate other simple sentences including declarative, affirmative, and active sentences. An example of an obligatory transformational rule is that of tense change (see Chomsky 1957:), e.g. *The man hits the ball*. The correct form of the verb is *hits.*

Optional transformations

There transformation rules which when applied on simple sentences generate new sentences that Chomsky calls ‘transforms’ including compound, negative, interrogative, and passive sentences. Chomsky provides four optional transformational rules:

1. **T and**: This is the rule for conjoining two sentences, for example

- *The scene of the movie was in Chicago.*
- *The scene of the play was in Chicago.*
- *The scene of the movie and the play was in Chicago*. (compound sentence)

2. **T not**: This is the rule for forming the negative form of affirmative sentences. For example,

- *They can dance.*
- *They cannot dance*. (Negative sentence)

3. **T q**: This is the rule for forming the interrogative form of affirmative sentences. For example,

- *She can ski.*
- *Can she ski?* (Interrogative sentence)

4. **T p**: This is the rule for deriving the passive form from active sentences. For example,

- *Peter spent money.*
- *Money was spent by Peter*. (Passive sentence)

Contrary to PSG, TGG accounts for the relationship between active and passive sentences by providing explicit rules showing transformations or movements, as illustrated below:

Mary will eat an apple (active) *An apple will be eaten by Mary (passive)*

$NP_1 - Aux - V - NP_2 \longrightarrow NP_2 - Aux + be + en - V - by + NP_1$

The bove transformational rule involves the permutation of the NPs and the insertion of the morphemes *be* and *by*, and past participle bound morpheme *–en.*

In this way, TGG can account for the difference between superficiall similar sentences like :

a)- The picture was wainted by a real artist.

b)- The picture was painted by a new technique.

Sentence a) has been derived from *A real artist painted the picture*. Sentence b) has been derived from *Someone painted the picture by a new technique*.

5. Aspects of the Theory of Syntax

Chomsky introduced the second version of TGG in *Aspects of the Theory of Syntax* (1965). In this second version, semantics and phonology were incorporated along with syntax into the grammatical system, as they had not been in *Syntactic Structures* (1957). This second version is referred to as the Standard Theory of TGG. In it, Chomsky (1965: 1) defended the view that "a linguistic theory is concerned primarily with an ideal speaker-listener, in a completely homogeneous speech-community, who knows its language perfectly and is unaffected by such grammatically irrelevant conditions as memory limitations, distractions, shifts of attention and interest, and errors (random or characteristic) in applying his knowledge of the language in actual performance".

Competence and Performance

According to Chomsky (1965: 2), we need to

> make a fundamental distinction between *competence* (the speaker-hearer's knowledge of his language) and *performance* (the actual use of language in concrete situations). Only under the idealization set forth in the preceding paragraph is performance a direct reflection of competence. In actual fact, it obviously could not directly reflect competence. A record of natural speech will show numerous false starts, deviations from rules, changes of plan in mid-course, and so on. The problem for the linguist, as well as for the child learning the language, is to determine from the data of performance the underlying system of rules that has been mastered by the speaker-hearer and that he puts to use in actual performance. Hence, in the technical sense, linguistic theory is mentalistic, since it is concerned with discovering a mental reality underlying actual behavior.

Chomsky sees this distinction associated to the langue-parole distinction of Saussure. However, he rejects his concept of 'langue', which he considers as a mere systematic inventory of items and thus rather opts for the Humboldtian conception of underlying competence as a system of generative processes. What is more, Chomsky sustains that a "grammar of a language purports to be a description of the ideal speaker-hearer's intrinsic competence". It is in this sense that he defines generative grammar.

Grammaticality and Acceptability

To clarify further the distinction between *competence* and *performance*, Chomsky introduces the terms of *acceptability* and *grammaticalness*. He uses the term 'acceptable' to refer to utterances that are perfectly natural and immediately comprehensible without paper-and-pencil analysis, and in no way bizarre or outlandish. Obviously, acceptability will be a matter of degree, along various dimensions. To illustrate, the sentences of (1) are somewhat more acceptable, in the intended sense, than those of (2):

(1) (i) I called up the man who wrote the book that you told me about
(ii) Quite a few of the students who you met who come from New York are friends of mine
(iii) John, Bill, Tom, and several of their friends visited us last night

(2) (i) I called the man who wrote the book that you told me about up
(ii) The man who the boy who the students recognized pointed out is a friend of mine

The more acceptable sentences are those that are more likely to be produced, more easily understood, less clumsy, and in some sense more natural. The notion 'acceptable' is not to be confused with 'gammatical'. Acceptability is a concept that belongs to the study of performance, whereas grammaticalness belongs to the study of competence. The sentences of (2) are low on the scale of acceptability but high on the scale of grammaticalness, in the technical sense of this term. That is, the generative rules of the language assign an interpretation to them in exactly the way in which they assign

an interpretation to the somewhat more acceptable sentences of (1). Like acceptability, grammaticalness is a matter of degree, but the scales of grammaticalness and acceptability do not coincide. Grammaticalness is only one of many factors that interact to determine acceptability.

The Organisation of a Generative Grammar

Chomsky stresses that knowledge of a language involves the implicit ability to understand indefinitely many sentences. Hence, a generative grammar must be a system of rules that can iterate to generate an indefinitely large number of structures. This system of rules can be analysed into the three major components of a generative grammar: the syntactic, phonological, and semantic components.

The syntactic component specifies an infinite set of abstract formal objects, each of which incorporates all information relevant to a single interpretation of a particular sentence.

The phonological component of a grammar determines the phonetic form of a sentence generated by the syntactic rules. That is, it relates a structure generated by the syntactic component to a phonetically represented signal.

The semantic component determines the semantic interpretation of a sentence. That is, it relates a structure generated by the syntactic component to a certain semantic representation. Both the phonological and semantic components are therefore purely interpretive.

The syntactic component of a grammar must specify, for each sentence, a *deep structure* that determines its semantic interpretation and a *surface structure* that determines its phonetic interpretation. The first of these is interpreted by the semantic component, the second, by the phonological component. The syntactic component consists of a base that generates deep structures and a transformational part that maps them into surface structures. The deep structure of a sentence is submitted to the semantic component for semantic interpretation, and its surface structure enters the phonological component and undergoes phonetic interpretation. The final effect of a grammar, then, is to relate a semantic interpretation to a phonetic representation — that is, to state how a sentence is interpreted.

Surface Structure and Deep Structure

The deep structure of a sentence is the underlying syntactic-semantic components of the sentence. That is to say, the deep structure is an abstract level of structural organisation in which all the elements determining structural interpretation are represented. The same deep structure can be the source of many other surface structures. For instance, the abstract underlying structure ‘Noun Phrase+Verb+ Noun Phrase’ can be the deep structure of a number of surface structures like *Tom eats an apple*, or *Paul plays the guitar*.

The surface structure is the superficial form in which the sentence appears phonologically or orthographically. To clarify this distinction further, here is an example:

a) Your shoes need cleaning

b) Your friends keep coming

The sentences a) and b) are superficially identical, they appear in a similar surface structure. However, their deep structures are different, because they have been derived in different syntactic ways. Sentence a) has been derived from two basic sentences: *your shoes are dirty*, and *someone must clean them*. Conversely, sentence b) has only one underlying sentence as its basis.

Context-sensitive Subcategorisation rules and Selectional Rules

Among the context-sensitive subcategorisation rules, two subtypes are distinguished. The first subtype includes strict subcategorisation rules, which subcategorize a lexical category in terms of the frame of category symbols in which it appears. In other words, these rules analyse a symbol in terms of its categorial context . The second subtype comprises selectional rules, which subcategorise a lexical category in terms of syntactic features that appear in specified positions in the sentence. That is to say, selectional rules analyse a symbol (generally, a complex symbol) in terms of syntactic features of the frames in which it appears. These rules express what are usually called 'selectional restrictions', or 'restrictions of co-occurrence'.

Subcategorisation Rules for Verbs

In the case of Verb subclassification, Chomsky (1965: 101) provided the strict subcategorisation rule for the verb as follows:

$$V \rightarrow CS / \_\_ \left\{ \begin{array}{l} NP \\ \# \\ Adjective \\ Predicate\text{-}Nominal \\ like \frown Predicate\text{-}Nominal \\ Prepositional\text{-}Phrase \\ \textit{that} \frown S' \\ NP\ (of \frown Det \frown N)\ S' \\ etc. \end{array} \right\}_{21}$$

This strict subcategorisation rules mean that a verb should be re-written as a complex symbol (CS), which can occur in each of the frames mentioned above. These strict subcategorisation rules for the verb when complemented by the lexicon '*eat, elapse, grow, seem, look, believe, persuade*' will generate such expressions as:

1. *John eats food.*
2. *A week elapsed.*
3. *John grew sad.*
4. *John grew a beard*
5. *John seems like a nice fellow.*
6. *John looked at Bill.*
7. *John believes that it is unlikely.*
8. *John persuaded Bill of the necessity for us to leave.*

When a particular frame has been described for the occurrence of the verb, as shown above, it is still necessary to provide selectional rules that describe the syntactic features of co-occurrence of linguistic

$$\begin{Bmatrix} \text{(i)} \\ \text{(ii)} \\ \text{(iii)} \\ \text{(iv)} \end{Bmatrix} [+V] \rightarrow CS/ \begin{Bmatrix} [+\text{Abstract}]\ \text{Aux} — \\ [-\text{Abstract}]\ \text{Aux} — \\ — \text{Det}\ [+\text{Animate}] \\ — \text{Det}\ [-\text{Animate}] \end{Bmatrix}$$

items with a particular frame. Chomsky (1965: 103) provided the following examples of selectional rules for the verb phrase (VP)

That is to say, a verb should be re-written as a complex symbol (CS) in each of the frames below:

1. An abstract noun [+abstract] may occur with an auxiliary and a verb, e.g., *The work may prove difficult.*

2. A verb may occur with a noun that is not abstract [-abstract], e.g., *John may go tomorrow*.

3. A verb may occur before a determiner and an animate noun [+animate], e.g., *I know the boy*.

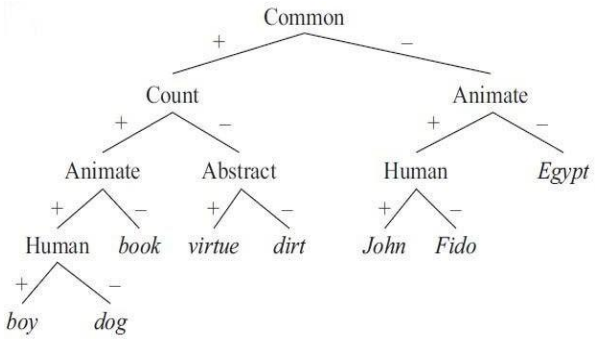
4. A verb may occur before a determiner and a noun that is not animate [-animate], e.g., *I know my job.*

Selectional Rules for Nouns

(i) $N \rightarrow [+N, \pm Common]$
(ii) $[+Common] \rightarrow [\pm Count]$
(iii) $[+Count] \rightarrow [\pm Animate]$
(iv) $[-Common] \rightarrow [\pm Animate]$
(v) $[+Animate] \rightarrow [\pm Human]$
(vi) $[-Count] \rightarrow [\pm Abstract]$

Chomsky (1965: provided the selectional rules for the noun as follows:

The above rules can be represented by means of a branching diagram as follows (see Chomsky 1965: 89):



For instance, in the sentence *Sincerity may frighten the boy* (op. cit.: 91), the syntactic features of *sincerity, boy* and *may* are as follows:

(*sincerity*, [+N, –Count, +Abstract])
(*boy*, [+N, +Count, +Common, +Animate, +Human])
(*may*, [+M])

In the sentence *Sincerity may frighten the boy,* the verb frighten cannot take an abstract noun as object. In addition, the t two nouns in the sentence do not share the same syntactic features. This explains the

reason why the two nouns in the sentence cannot be inverted in the way those in John loves Mary can be. The selection of any NP automatically prescribes the range of VPs that can collocate with it. Similarly, the VP selected also predetermines the set of NPs that can co-occur with it as object.

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Practice Question

Discuss Chomsky's concept of linguistic competence and performance. How did it challenge structuralist approaches to language?

Lecture Seven

Semantics

1. Introduction

Lecture seven introduces the field of semantics to the students. Its objectives is to increase their knowledge about the study of meaning and the theories introduced by scholars to deal with the meaning of words and sentences. First, the discipline is defined along with major concepts, such as 'sense' and 'reference'. Second, the theory of componential analysis is also explained together with lexical relations.

2. Preliminary Observations

As was previously noted, the study of meaning was neglected within structural linguistics in the US, particularly in the Bloomfieldian era. Later, the study of meaning became a requisite in linguistics. Chomsky's (1957) Generative Grammar considered grammar autonomous and independent from semantics although a relationship between syntax and semantics was recognised. In 1965, Chomsky's standard version of generative grammar considered syntax as the basic component of grammar completed by phonology and semantics.

3. Definitions

Semantics is the study of the meaning of words, phrases, and sentences. A pertinent traditional distinction in lexical semantics is made between *reference* and *sense*.

The reference of a word is the thing, event, or state that it points to in the world. It is what the word denotes, and it is external to the mind. Thus, if someone refers to a particular animal having wings and feathers using the word *bird*, the reference is to that particular animal in the real world. Conversely, **the sense** of a word is its meaning in relation to the linguistic system wherein it is involved, and this meaning is conceptual.

Semantics is mainly concerned with the objective and conventional meaning of words rather than with a specific subjective meaning related to a particular circumstance. In linguistics, semantics studies *conceptual meaning* instead of *associative meaning.*

Conceptual meaning is the type of meaning that dictionaries are designed to describe. For example, the word needle in English means "thin, sharp, steel instrument".

Associative meaning concerns different associations or connotations attached to a word like needle. They might associate it with "pain," or "illness," or "blood," or "drugs," or "thread," or "knitting," or "hard to find" (especially in a haystack), and these associations may differ from one person to the next (see Yule 2010: 113).

4. Theory of Componential Analysis

The earliest proponent of componential analysis was Roman Jakobson in the post-Saussurean period of European structuralism (see Lecture 4). The principle lying behind componential analysis is that the meaning of words composing language is provided by the sense components of these words. These components are also referred to as *semantic features* (see Yule 2010: 114).

To understand the significance of componential and analysis and sematic features, let us consider the sentence *cheese ate Tom*. It is grammatical as it obeys the basic syntactic rules for forming English sentences. However, it is unacceptable semantically.

This issue can be remedied by taking into account the features of the nouns *Tom* and *cheese*. The components of the conceptual meaning of the noun *cheese* are different from those of the noun *Tom*. Therefore, only one of them can be used as the subject of the verb *ate*. That is, the noun that refers to some entity that can do the action of eating. The noun *cheese* does not while the noun *Tom* does. The feature that the noun *Tom* has is +animate. This means that the noun denotes an animate being. The feature that the noun *cheese* has is – animate. This means that the noun denotes an inanimate entity.

This example shows how componential analysis procedure can analyse the meaning of words in terms of semantic features. These features +animate, −animate, +human, −human, +male, and −male can be used to distinguish the meaning of words in a language. Table 3 below provides distinguishing features of the meanings of the English words *house, cow, girl, woman, boy,* and *man.*

Table 3. Example of some semantic features

	house	cow	girl	woman	boy	man
animate	-	+	+	+	+	+
human	-	-	+	+	+	+
male	-	-	-	-	+	+
adult	-	+	-	+	-	+

The analysis in Table 3 shows that the meaning of the English word *girl* includes the features +human, +female, −adult. It also reveals the feature that is required in a noun in order for it to appear as the subject of a particular verb. Hence, this type of analysis into semantic features is useful.

The..... is eating a sandwich.

N [+human]

This procedure allows the prediction of the set of nouns that can occur the above sentence and those that cannot such as chair, book, or pencil. This is because all of them lack the semantic feature + human.

5. Lexical relations

In addition to componential analysis, semantics is also concerned with the study of what is known as lexical relations, which describe relationship among word meanings. It is the study of how the lexicon is managed and how the lexical meanings of lexical items are related to each other. There are several types of lexical relations: synonymy, antonymy, hyponymy, homonymy, polysemy, and metonymy (see Palmer 1981: 83).

Synonymy

This relationship characterise two or more words with very closely related meanings. These are called synonyms. For instance, *hide* and c*onceal* are synonymous. Further examples of *synonyms include: angry – furious, cold – chilly, different – dissimilar, happy – content,* and *lazy – idle.*

Antonymy

This relationship holds between two words with opposite meanings. These are called antonyms. Examples of antonymy include the pairs: young – elderly, hard – easy, happy – wistful, wise – foolish, fat – slim, warm – cool, early – late, fast – slow. Antonyms are usually divided into two main types: *gradable* and *non-gradable.*

Gradable antonyms are opposites along a scale. They can be used in comparative forms, such as *big* and *small* in *An elephant is bigger than a monkey* and *A fish is smaller than a whale.*

Non-gradable antonyms are direct opposites like absent – present, dead – alive. They are referred to as *complementaries*. These cannot be graded and thus cannot be used in comparative constructions. For instance, *more absent* does not exist in English.

Hyponymy

Hyponymy is a relationship of inclusion. That is, when the meaning of one word is included in the meaning of another. For example, hyponymy characterises the relationship between *flower* and *tulip* or *insect* and *bee* because a *tulip* is a *flower*, and a *bee* is an *insect*. The meaning of *flower* and *insect* is included in that of *tulip* and *bee* respectively. *Tulip* is a hyponym of *flower* and *bee* a hyponym of *insect*. In these examples, *flower* and *insect* are called the superordinate, i.e., higher-level terms. *Tulip* and *rose* are co-hyponyms of *flower* while *bee* and *butterfly* are co-hyponyms of *insect*. They are lower-order terms.

Homophones and Homonyms

Homophones

We use this term to refer to the relationship between two or more different written forms having the same pronunciation. These are called homophones. Common examples include *bare/bear*, *meat/meet,*

flour/flower, pail/pale, right/write, sew/so and to/too/two.

Homonyms

We use this term when one word, in the written or spoken form has two or more unrelated meanings, as in these examples:

bank (of a river) – *bank* (financial institution)
bat (flying creature) – *bat* (used in sports)
mole (on skin) – *mole* (small animal)
pupil (at school) – *pupil* (in the eye)
race (contest of speed) – *race* (ethnic group)

The two types of *bank* are not related in meaning. Homonyms are words that have separate histories and meanings, but have accidentally come to have exactly the same form.

Polysemy

This relationship exists between two or more words with the same form and related meanings. Polysemy can be defined as one word, in the written or spoken form, having various meanings that are all related. Examples are the word *head*, used to refer to the object on top of your body, froth on top of a glass of beer, person at the top of a company or department, and many other things. Other examples of polysemy are *foot* (of person, of bed, of mountain) or *run* (a person does, water does, colours do).

Metonymy

The relatedness of meaning found in polysemy is essentially based on similarity. The head of a company is similar to the head of a person on top of and controlling the body. There is another type of relationship between words, based simply on a close connection in everyday experience. That close connection can be based on a container–contents relation (bottle/water, can/juice), a whole–part relation (car/wheels, house/roof) or a representative–symbol relationship (king/crown, the President/the White House). Using one of these words to refer to the other is an example of metonymy.

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Practice Question

What is the difference between lexical meaning and sentence meaning? Illustrate your answer with examples.

Lecture Eight

Functional Linguistics

1. Introduction

This eighth lecture accounts for functional linguistic theories. The objective of this lecture is to help students understand the shift of linguistic theory from focus on syntactic rules and investigation of the form of linguistic units to the study of their communicative function. Another objective is to increase their knowledge about the basic principles of functionalism and the theories of language use.

2. Key principles of Functionalism

Functionalist theories of language have most often been contrasted with formalist theories, particularly those developed by Chomsky in 1957-1965. Traditionally, *functionalism* was closely linked to the works conducted within the Prague structuralist school of linguistics, known as the *Prague Circle of Linguistics*. The functionalist view developed in the 1930s revived in the 1960s. Nowadays, *functionalism* is mainly associated with the British Firthian School of linguistics whose proponents include Michael Halliday. This school had important impact on areas of language description ranging from text and discourse analysis to pedagogic grammar. Broadly speaking, most of the work on language has come out of the functionalist convention. For instance, Halliday's three metafunctions of language: (i) Ideational, (ii) Interpersonal, and (iii) Textual remain the adequate definition of what dimensions a linguistic theory needs to account for.

The *functionalist approach* in linguistics as its name indicates, focuses on the functions of language, and considers them more important than syntactic forms. That is to say, functional linguists consider language in terms of its use rather than its structure. This approach was put forward around the beginning of the 1970s as an alternative to Chomsky's Transformational Generative Grammar approach. One of the first theoretical leaders of this trend is Hymes (1972), who first advocated the necessity of considering *communicative competence* as an integral component of language acquisition. Another scholar, Halliday (1973), revealed this shift from an emphasis on the formal aspect of language to a focus on the functions it fulfils. These views emerge out of a number of scholars' descriptions of the various functions that language can have. As for example, Jakobson (1960) attributes six functions to language (See Lecture 4).

The basic tenet of functionalism is that the major purpose of language is human communication, and that this fact is crucial in explaining why languages take the form they do. This view contrasts somewhat starkly with that of Chomsky, for whom language is essentially a vehicle for expressing thought, with interpersonal communication being just one of the uses to which it can be put, and not to be prioritized over other possible functions. Further basic beliefs of functionalists (See Brown 2005: 697) include the fact that,

- they regard communication as the primary function of language, which shapes the forms languages take.
- they attribute great importance to external (cognitive and sociocultural) factors in explaining linguistic phenomena
- they reject the claim that syntax is autonomous from semantics and pragmatics.

3. Hymes' Theory of Communicative Competence

The American linguist and anthropologist, Dell Hymes, introduced the notion of 'communicative competence' in the late 1960s (see Hymes 1962). He used this term to stress some requisite principles relating to grammatical knowledge and language use. These principles include (see Keith Brown 2005: 666):

- The ability to use a language well involves knowing how to use language appropriately in any given context.
- The ability to speak and understand language is not based solely on grammatical knowledge.
- What counts as appropriate language varies according to context and may involve a range of modes – for example, speaking, writing, singing, whistling, drumming.
- Learning what counts as appropriate language occurs through a process of socialization into particular ways of using language through participation in particular communities.

Hymes's notion of 'communicative competence' emerged out his criticism of Noam Chomsky's distinction between 'competence' and 'performance' (Chomsky 1965). Chomsky used the term competence to refer to the native speaker's implicit knowledge of the grammatical rules governing her/his language. This tacit knowledge, for Chomsky, enables speakers to create new and grammatically well-formed sentences and gives them the ability to distinguish grammatically incorrect from grammatically correct sentences. Despite the importance of grammatical knowledge, effective communication, according to Hymes, does not depend only on knowledge of grammatically correct and incorrect sentences, but on awareness of what is communicatively appropriate in a given contextual situation. In addition, he views competence as both knowledge of language and the ability to use it.

The emphasis that Hymes has put on the appropriateness of language use according to context, in his term 'communicative competence', braved Chomsky's view about what exactly knowledge of a language is. In this theory of language use, knowledge of social-cultural conventions of use, along with norms, attitudes, and values are requisite in addition to knowledge of grammatical rules. In this way, the goal of linguistic theory, or what the study of linguistics proper is, shifts from Chomsky's idealised view of language competence at an abstract level to Hymes' theory of actual language use influenced by social-cultural conventions that determine appropriate linguistic behaviour in the context of speech.

3.1 Hymes' S.P.E.A.K.I.N.G Theory

In a paper entitled 'Models of the interaction of language and social life', Hymes (1972) proposed the S.P.E.A.K.I.N.G model for the analysis of speech. For him, to speak a given language correctly, one does not only need to know its vocabulary and grammar, but also be aware of the context in which words are used. In his view, communication is rooted in sociocultural contexts and is ruled by conventions emerging from those contexts. Examples of speech events comprise interviews, discussions in a shop, sermons, lectures, and informal conversation. In the S.P.E.A.K.I.N.G model, Hymes specifies the aspects involved in any speech event. These aspects include:

S - **Setting and Scene** - Setting refers to time, place, and physical circumstances. Scene refers to the psychological or cultural definitions of the event.
P - **Participants** - Who is involved, as either speaker/listener, audience.
E - **Ends** – This aspect is defined in terms of goals and outcomes. 'Goals' refer to what is expected to be achieved in any event. 'Outcomes' refers to what is actually achieved. Goals and outcomes exist at both community and individual participant level.
A - **Acts** - Speech events involve a number of speech acts, such as requests, commands, and greetings.
K - **Key** - The tone, manner, and spirit in which acts are done, for example, serious or playful. Specific keys may be signalled through verbal or/and non-verbal means.
I - **Instrumentalities** - The particular language/language varieties used and the mode of communication (spoken, written).
N - **Norms** - Norms of interaction refer to rules of speaking, who can say what, when, and how. Norms of interpretation refer to the conventions surrounding how any speech may be interpreted.
G - **Genres** - Categories or types of language use, such as the sermon, the interview, or the editorial. These may be the same as 'speech event' but may be a part of a speech event. For example, the sermon is a genre and may at the same time be a speech event (when performed conventionally in a church); a sermon may be a genre, however, that is invoked in another speech event, for example, at a party for humorous effect.

4. Halliday's 'Language as a Social Semiotic'

In a publication entitled *Language as Social Semiotic: The Social Interpretation of Language and Meaning*, Halliday (1978: 38), criticised Chomsky's distinction between 'competence' and 'performance' of being useless, as he claimed, "If you are interested in linguistic interaction, you don't want the high level of idealization that is involved in the notion of competence; you can't use it, because most of the distinctions that are important to you are idealized out of the picture".

According to Halliday (op. cit.: 2), "A social reality (or a 'culture') is itself an edifice of meanings – a semiotic construct. In this perspective, language is one of the semiotic systems that constitute a culture …". His use of the expression 'language as social semiotic' implied "interpreting language within a sociocultural context, in which the culture itself is interpreted in semiotic terms – as an information system …". He thus joined Hymes' idea of 'communicative competence' and advocated the study of how language is used in context instead of taking a reductionist view by focusing on formal syntactic rules.

4.1 Systemic Functional Linguistics

Systemic Functional Grammar or Linguistics (SFL) was first introduced by Michael Halliday (1985). It refers to a new approach to the study of grammar that is completely different from the traditional view in which language is a set of rules for specifying grammatical structures. Structural concerns have been dominant in linguistics for some time; but the usefulness of a combination of structural and functional approaches seemed necessary (See Lyons 1970: 141). In the functionalist view, language is a resource for making meaning and hence grammar is a resource for creating meaning by means of wording. Halliday and Matthiessen (1999: 3) explained what systemic grammar is and opposed it to formal grammar:

> A systemic grammar is one of the class of functional grammars, which means (among other things) that it is semantically motivated, or 'natural', in contradistinction to formal grammars, which are autonomous, and therefore semantically arbitrary. In a systemic grammar every category (and 'category' is used here in the general sense of an organizing theoretical concept, not in the narrower sense of 'class' as in formal grammar) is based on meaning: it has a semantic as well as a formal, lexico-grammatical reactance.

To capture the essence of the distinction between grammar and theories of grammar, Halliday and Matthiessen (1999) call the latter 'grammatics'. The nature of language is closely related to the demands that we make on it, the functions it has to serve. These functions are specific to a given culture. Halliday and Matthiessen emphasise the need for a richer theory of grammar (i.e., SFL), claiming that the traditional 'grammars as rule' type are not sufficiently satisfactory. Unlike the formal grammars type of theory, SFL takes the resource perspective rather than the rule perspective, and is designed to display the overall system of grammar rather than only fragments. That is why it has come to be known as a Systemic Functional Grammar. In Halliday's (1985: xiv) terms:

> The theory behind the present account is known as 'systemic' theory. Systemic theory is a theory of meaning as choice, by which a language, or any other semiotic system, is interpreted as networks of interlocking options… whatever is chosen in one system becomes the way into a set of choices

in another, and go on as far as we need to, or as far as we can in the time available, or as far as we know how.

In Systemic Functional Linguistics, 'clause' rather than 'sentence' is the unit of analysis. In Systemic theory, a clause is a unit in which meanings of three different kinds are combined. Three distinct structures, each expressing one kind of semantic organization, are mapped onto one another to produce a single wording. These semantic structures are referred to as Meta-functions.

Halliday distinguishes three grammatically relevant 'language functions', and illustrates them from English:

(i) the **ideational meta-function**. This function refers to what is commonly called the 'cognitive meaning', or 'propositional content', of sentences. This function is concerned with 'ideation', grammatical resources for construing our experience of the world around and inside us.

(ii) the **interpersonal meta-function**. This function refers to distinctions such as those of 'mood', or 'modality' (e.g. the differences between statements, questions and commands). This function is concerned with the interaction between speaker and addressee, the grammatical resources for enacting social roles in general, and speech roles in particular, in dialogic interaction, i.e. for establishing, changing, and maintaining interpersonal relations.

(iii) the **textual meta-function**. This function refers to the way in which the grammatical and intonational structures of sentences relate to one another in continuous texts and to the situations in which they are used. It is in terms of the textual function that Halliday describes certain kinds of stylistic variation (e.g. the use of an active or passive sentence to express the same 'cognitive meaning'). This function is concerned with the creation of text and with the presentation of ideational and interpersonal meanings as information that can be shared by speaker and listener in text unfolding in context.

Furthermore, Halliday (1985) introduces the term 'transitivity system'. The ideational meta-function is analysed in terms of transitivity system, i.e., a choice between the six processes and the participants and circumstances associated with those processes. A clause in its ideational function is a means of representing patterns of experience, i.e., to build a mental picture of reality. This is what people employ to make sense of their experience of what goes on around them and inside them: these processes are arranged in the semantic system of the language and expressed through the grammar of the clause. The system that works out the types of process and hence participants in the process and circumstances associated with the process is known as the 'transitivity system'. In English, the processes are of the following types (see Halliday & Matthiessen 2014):

(1) Material Process or the process of doing, construes doings and happenings including actions, activities, and events. A material clause is characterized by particular structural configurations, such as Process+ Actor+ Goal (+Recipient), and Process+ Range.

(2) Mental process construes sensing, perception, cognition, intention, and emotion; configurations of a process of consciousness involves a participant endowed with consciousness and typically a participant entering into or created by that consciousness, configured as Process+ Senser+ Phenomenon.

(3) Relational process serves to characterise and to identify. If 'material' process is concerned with our experience of the material world and 'mental' process is concerned with our experience of the world of our own consciousness, both of this outer experience and this inner experience may be construed by relational processes; but they model this experience as 'being' or 'having' rather than as 'doing' or 'sensing'.

(4) Behavioural Processes are processes of physiological and psychological behaviour, like smiling, coughing, laughing, breathing, etc. they usually have one participant: the Behaver, for example, John smiled gently. They are intermediate between material and mental processes, in that the Behaver is typically a conscious being, like the Senser, but the process functions more like one of 'doing'.

(5) Verbal Processes are processes of 'saying' of any kind. 'Saying' covers "any kind of symbolic exchange of meaning", *like the notice tells you to keep quiet*, or my watch says *it's half past ten*.
The grammatical function of you, I, the notice, my watch is that of Sayer". (Halliday & Matthiessen 2014: 301)

(6) Existential Processes show that something exists or happens. The word *there* is frequently used in such clauses, but it has no identified function or meaning, and is merely a subject filler. The typical verbs used in these clauses are 'be', 'exist', 'arise' and other verbs expressing existence.

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Practice Question

How does functional linguistics explain the relationship between language structure and language use?

Lecture Nine

Pragmatics

1. Introduction

Lecture nine concerns of the discipline of pragmatics. It sets out to survey the theories of pragmatics. The aim of Lecture nine is to introduce learners to the area of pragmatics through a presentation of outstanding pragmatic linguistic theories; particularly, Speech Act Theory and Theory of Conversational maxims.

2. Pragmatics vs. Semantics

Pragmatics is generally contrasted with semantics. While semantics focuses on meaning with no reference to language users and communicative functions of sentences, pragmatics is interested in the connection between linguistic expressions and the intentions of their users. Notably, the distinction between conventional meaning (what an expression means) and speaker's meaning (what a speaker means by using a particular expression) is sometimes used to draw the line between semantics and pragmatics. According to Yule (2010: 127), "Communication clearly depends on not only recognizing the meaning of words in an utterance, but recognizing what speakers mean by their utterances. The study of what speakers mean, or "speaker meaning", is called "pragmatics".

3. Austin's Speech Act Theory

Speech Act Theory was developed by the linguist and philosopher J.L. Austin (1962) in his book *How to Do Things with Words*. The theory emerges in response to what Austin (1962: 3) calls the 'descriptive fallacy', the view that a declarative sentence is always used to describe some fact, which it must do truly or falsely. According to Austin, when we say something, we perform three acts simultaneously: a locutionary act, an illocutionary act, and a perlocutionary act. At the locutionary level, a speaker produces sounds (phonetic act) which are well ordered with respect to the phonological system and grammar of a particular language (phatic act), and carry some sense with respect to the semantic and pragmatic rules of that language (rhetic act). For example, saying the understandable utterance 'pass me the salt' constitutes a locutionary act. At the illocutionary level, he is expressing his intention by virtue of conventions shared in his speech community, for instance, stating, promising, warning, requesting, etc. When saying 'Pass me the salt', the speaker is making a request, which is the illocutionary force. At the perlocutionary level, he performs a third act, which includes the consequences of his speaking. For example, when the hearer passes the salt to the speaker represents the result produced by the locutionary act. In order for the speech act to be successful, it must fulfil some appropriateness conditions, or 'felicity' conditions. That is to say, locution is successful if words and sounds are correctly produced; illocution is appropriate if it meets the conditions for its realisation; perlocution may be effective when

it produces consequences desired by the producer (For further details, see Chapman and Routledge 2009).

In addition, Austin introduced the terms of constative utterances and performative utterances. A constative utterance states a fact or asserts something that is true or false, e.g., 'Rome is in Italy'. A performative utterance indicates the action performed or the speech act. Austin later realised that a clear distinction between the two types of utterances is unjustifiable. If, for example, we say 'There is a snake behind you', we do more than assert something; we warn someone about danger. Assertions can thus be used to perform such acts as to warn, to apologise, etc. A distinction is therefore drawn between explicit performatives and implicit performatives. For Austin, explicit performatives are those containing a performative verb (warn, promise, advice, request, etc.) that names the speech act or illocutionary force of the utterance. Implicit performatives do not contain a performative verb, e.g., 'There is a snake behind you', which is implicitly meant as a warning. It is also suggested that there is no difference between constatives and implicit performatives. In fact, the sentence 'Rome is in Italy' can be interpreted as '(I state) Rome is in Italy' containing the implicit performative verb 'state'.

4. Searle's Speech Acts

John Searle, one of Austin's students, contributed extensively to developing Speech Act Theory, which he addressed from the viewpoint of intentionality. He considered linguistic intentionality as derived from mental intentionality. In his *Speech Acts*, Searle (1969) claimed that Austin's 'felicity conditions' are constitutive rules of speech acts to the extent that to perform a speech act means to meet the conventional rules which constitute a specific speech act. In his analysis of the act of promising, Searle offered a taxonomy of speech acts into four types, as follows:

(1) propositional content (what the speech act is about);

(2) preparatory condition, which states the prerequisites for the speech act;

(3) sincerity condition (the speaker has to sincerely intend to keep a promise); and

(4) essential condition (the speaker's intention that the utterance counts as an act and as such is to be recognised by the hearer).

4.1 Searle's Types of Speech Act

Searle introduced five classes of speech acts:

Assertives - Statements that provide information, state a conclusion, or express the belief of the speaker. Examples of assertive speech acts include "Paris is the capital city of France" and "Tom is a teacher".

Directives - This type of speech aims to cause someone else to do something. Commands, requests, and invitations are types of directives, such as "Could you open the window?"

Commissives - Words that oblige the speaker to do an action in the future, such as making a promise or

an offer. “I will take you home” is an example of a commissive speech act.

Expressives - Speech that expresses a feeling or an emotion. An example of an expressive speech act is “I’m sorry for missing the meeting”.

Declarations - Like Austin's performatives, these speech acts create a change in the world or cause something to happen. For example, “I declare the conference open” is a declaration.

The various types of speech acts describe the illocutionary act, or the result that the speaker intends to achieve with his/her remarks.

5. Theory of Conversational Maxims (Grice 1975)

A prominent theory in pragmatics was offered by H.P. Grice in his book *The Logic and Conversation* (1975). Grice introduced the principle of cooperativeness, which he considered as the key element of verbal interaction. In his view, certain aspects of conversational behaviour cannot be accounted for unless we assume that 1) people are cooperative, and 2) People assume that other people are cooperative. Furthermore, he suggested that under this general principle, a number of conversational maxims are subsumed, and which speakers must abide by. Maxims are classified into four categories:

Quantity, Quality, Relation, and Manner.

(Quantity maxims)

(1) Make your contribution as informative as is required (for the current purposes of the exchange).

(2) Do not make your contribution more informative than is required.

(Quality supermaxim)

Try to make your contribution one that is true.

(Quality maxims)

(1) Do not say what you believe to be false.

(2) Do not say that for which you lack adequate evidence.

(Relation maxim)

Be relevant.

(Manner supermaxim)

Be perspicuous.

(Manner maxims)

(1) Avoid obscurity of expression.

(2) Avoid ambiguity.

(3) Be brief (avoid unnecessary prolixity).

(4) Be orderly.

‘and one might need others’ (Grice 1989: 27).

Grice is interested in explaining why utterances often seem to mean more than they say. His

convention is that only if we assume that people are trying to be cooperative can we work out how a given utterance is intended and interpreted. Here is an interesting example that illustrates this.

A. I saw Mr. X having dinner with a woman yesterday.

B. Really? Does his wife know about it?

A. Of course she does. She was the woman he was having dinner with.

In this conversation, B was misled by A's opening remark. B has drawn the conclusion: "the woman Mr. X was having dinner with was not his wife". B has drawn this conclusion because A did not reveal the identity of the woman, thereby giving less information than desirable, thus breaking the maxim of quantity.

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Practice Question

Why is context important in pragmatics? Explain how context influences the interpretation of meaning in communication.

Lecture Ten
Cognitive Linguistics

1. Introduction

Lecture ten introduces the area of cognitive linguistics. The objective of this lecture is primarily to acquaint students with linguistic theories featuring the research area of cognitive linguistics. Another objective is to draw their attention to the criticism that cognitive linguists directed to traditional formal linguistics (Chomsky and his colleagues). In addition, this lecture aims to help students understand how meaning is viewed in cognitive linguistics and the methods used to study it, and thereby, familiarise students with Cognitive Semantics, Cognitive Grammar, and Conceptual Metaphor Theory.

2. Cognitive Linguistics: Brief overview

Cognitive Linguistics began as an approach to the study of language. It has its origins in the 1980s as a conscious reaction to Chomskyan linguistics, with its emphasis on formalistic syntactic analysis and its underlying assumption that language is independent from other forms of cognition. However, evidence showed that language is learned and processed in the same way as other types of information about the world. In addition, the same cognitive processes are involved in language as are involved in other forms of thinking. The two key figures who are associated with the origin of Cognitive Linguistics are George Lakoff and Ronald Langacker. Both started their careers as members of a group of young scholars associated with the approach headed by Noam Chomsky. By the 1980s, however, both Lakoff and Langacker were becoming increasingly dissatisfied with the formalistic approach to syntax associated with the Chomskyan School. Both scholars turned their attention, instead, to semantic issues, which had been relatively neglected within the Chomskyan framework.

Lakoff raised fundamental questions with regard to ‘objectivist’ semantics – that is, theories, which maintained that sentence meaning maps onto objectively provable facts in the world. Lakoff’s other main contribution was to identify a number of ‘conceptual metaphors’ that underlie our abstract concepts and the way we think about the world and ourselves (Lakoff and Johnson 1980). For example, one of the most important conceptual metaphors is the idea that ‘good’ or ‘active’ things are ‘up’ whereas ‘bad’ or ‘static’ things are ‘down’, which allows us to say that we’re ‘feeling low’.

Langacker’s contribution is different from Lakoff’s. His Cognitive Grammar (Langacker, 1987, 2008) offers a new view of the issue concerning the nature of linguistic meaning and its relation to the surface form of utterances. He proposed an approach in which a language is characterised as an inventory of phonological, semantic, and symbolic units, and language acquisition is a matter of a speaker’s increasing command of these units.

3. Cognitive Grammar

The term 'cognitive grammar' was introduced by American linguist Ronald Langacker (1987) in his two-volume publication *Foundations of Cognitive Grammar*. Crystal (2008: 84) provides this definition of cognitive grammar:

> A linguistic theory which sees language as an integral part of cognition, a means whereby cognitive content is given structure; originally called space grammar. In this approach, the basic function of language is to symbolize conceptualization by means of PHONOLOGY. GRAMMAR is seen as an inherently meaningful (or 'symbolic') component of the theory, linking SEMANTICS (viewed in conceptualist terms) and phonology".

3.1 Key assumptions of Cognitive Grammar

According to Radden and Dirven (2007: xii-xiii), Cognitive Grammar is based on the following assumptions:

Assumption 1: The grammar of a language is part of human cognition and interacts with other cognitive faculties, especially with perception, attention, and memory. For example, in the same way that we focus on a bird we see flying in the sky and not on the sky surrounding the bird, we describe the situation as *a bird in the sky* and not as *the sky around the bird.*

Assumption 2: The grammar of a language reflects and presents generalisations about phenomena in the world as its speakers experience them. For example, tense as a grammatical form is used to express general notions of time (present, past and future) but not specific notions such as years, hours, or days, which are expressed by lexical material.

Assumption 3: Forms of grammar are, like lexical items, meaningful and never "empty" or meaningless, as often assumed in purely structural models of grammar. For example, the element *to* of a *to*-infinitive as in *I'd like to hear from you* indicates that my wishes are directed towards a goal.

Assumption 4: The grammar of a language represents the whole of a native speaker's knowledge of both the lexical categories and the grammatical structures of her language.

Assumption 5 : The grammar of a language is usage-based in that it provides speakers with a variety of structural options to present their view of a given scene. For example, the same scene might be described as *I'm running out of time* or *Time is running out.*

Cognitive grammar is a *usage-based* approach to grammar that emphasises *symbolic* and *semantic* definitions of theoretical concepts that have traditionally been analysed from a purely syntactic perspective. By a *usage-based* approach, he meant that language acquisition proceeds on the basis of encounters with actual data, it is not driven by the setting of parameters of a supposedly Universal Grammar. What is 'grammatical' in a language is determined by conformity with schemas

and patterns extracted from previous usage, not by reference to abstract innate principles.

Cognitive grammar is associated with broader movements in contemporary language studies, especially cognitive linguistics and functionalism. In reaction to traditional formal grammar, Langacker (2008: 3–4) argues,

> Portraying grammar as a purely formal system is not just wrong but wrong-headed. I will argue, instead, that grammar is meaningful. This is so in two respects. For one thing, the elements of grammar—like vocabulary items—have meanings in their own right. Additionally, grammar allows us to construct and symbolize the more elaborate meanings of complex expressions (like phrases, clauses, and sentences). It is thus an essential aspect of the conceptual apparatus through which we apprehend and engage the world. And instead of being a distinct and self-contained cognitive system, grammar is not only an integral part of cognition but also a key to understanding it.

Langacker claims that Cognitive Grammar is intensely functional, since the two basic functions of language are *symbolic* (allowing conceptualisations to be symbolised by sounds and gestures) and *communicative/ interactive*. The symbolic function is directly manifested in the design of Cognitive Grammar, which suggests only symbolic structures for the description of lexicon, morphology, and syntax. A manifestation of the communicative/interactive function is the fundamental claim that all linguistic units are extracted from usage events.

Usage Event

Langacker (2007: 425) defines a *usage event* as an actual instance of language use. It is the result of the combination of a comprehensive conceptualisation (i.e., a full contextual understanding) with an elaborate expression realised in all its phonetic and gestural detail. Langacker claims that all linguistic units are extracted from usage events. The two global facets of a usage event are *conceptualisation* and *expression*. Corresponding to these are the two global facets of extracted linguistic units, referred to as the 'semantic pole' and the 'phonological pole'. Every linguistic unit has both a semantic and a phonological pole. Langacker goes on to distinguish three basic types of units depending on which sectors have salient and significant specifications:

- **Semantic units** are those that only have a semantic pole (in the narrow sense).
- **Phonological units** (e.g., a phoneme or a phonotactic pattern) have only a phonological pole.
- **A symbolic unit** has both a semantic and a phonological pole, consisting in the symbolic linkage between the two.

Symbolic Relations

Cognitive grammar mainly goes against traditional theories of language because the way in which we produce and process language is determined not by the syntactic rules but by the symbols evoked by linguistic units. These linguistic units include morphemes, words, phrases, clauses, sentences and whole texts, all of which are essentially symbolic in nature. The way in which we join linguistic units together is also symbolic rather than rule governed because grammar is itself "meaningful", as (Langacker (2008: 4) maintains. He thus claims the existence of a direct symbolic link between linguistic form (i.e., phonological structure) and semantic structure.

4. Cognitive Semantics

Crystal (2008: 84) defines cognitive semantics as

> a semantic theory within cognitive grammar. This theory identifies meaning with conceptualization – the structures and processes which are part of mental experience. The theory stresses the importance of bodily experience in conceptualization. It operates with an encyclopedic view of meaning, not recognizing a clear boundary between linguistic and general knowledge. lexical items, which act as pointers or triggers for encyclopedic knowledge, are therefore typically polysemous, and analysed as a network of related senses. The theory identifies a number of processes such as metaphor and metonymy as general cognitive processes rather than purely linguistic devices. A central notion is how a conceptual content is 'construed': the construal of a lexical item depends on several factors, including the 'cognitive domains' in which it appears (e.g. space, time, colour) and variations in perspective and salience.

4.1 Conceptual Metaphor Theory

Conceptual Metaphor Theory was introduced within the field of cognitive semantics by two cognitive linguists: George Lakoff and Mark Johnson. Importantly, one of the most influential books to emerge from the cognitive linguistic tradition is Lakoff and Johnson's *Metaphors We Live By* (Lakoff and Johnson 1980; see also other publications by Lakoff and Turner 1989; Lakoff 1987, 1993). Lakoff and his colleagues use evidence from everyday conventional linguistic expressions to deduce the existence of metaphorical relations or mappings between conceptual domains in the human mind.

Lakoff's primary goal in developing the conceptual theory of metaphor is to uncover these *metaphorical mappings* between domains and how they have guided human reasoning and behaviour. The central characteristic of Lakoff and Johnson's theory of conceptual metaphor is that metaphor is not a property of individual linguistic expressions and their meanings, but of conceptual domains. In principle, any concept from the *source domain* – the domain supporting the literal meaning of the expression – can be used to describe a concept in the *target domain* – the domain the sentence is actually

about.

In the cognitive linguistic view, metaphors are not just a stylistically attractive way of expressing ideas by means of language, but a way of thinking about things. In the same vein Lakoff and Johnson (1980: 7) argue that we do not just exploit the metaphor TIME IS MONEY linguistically, but we actually think of, or conceptualize, what they call the *target concept* TIME via the *source concept* MONEY. In other words, when we use the following English phrases we establish links between two concepts that do not seem to belong together by their very nature.

You're wasting my time.

Can you give me a few minutes.

How do you spend your time?

We are running out of time.

Is that worth your while?

The source and target concepts are not conceived in isolation, but are felt to be rooted in 'cognitive models' and 'cultural models'. What is transferred, then, by a metaphor is not only the properties inherent in the individual concepts, but the structure, the internal relations or the logic of a whole cognitive model.

Conceptual Metaphor: Definition

Kövecses (2002: 4) defines metaphor in the following way:

> In the cognitive linguistic view, metaphor is defined as understanding one conceptual domain in terms of another conceptual domain…. Examples of this include when we talk and think about life in terms of journeys, about arguments in terms of war, about love also in terms of journeys, about theories in terms of buildings, about ideas in terms of food, about social organizations in terms of plants, and many others. A convenient shorthand way of capturing this view of metaphor is the following: conceptual domain (a) is conceptual domain (b), which is what is called a conceptual metaphor. A conceptual metaphor consists of two conceptual domains, in which one domain is understood in terms of another. A conceptual domain is any coherent organization of experience.

In the above quotation, the phrase "understanding one domain in terms of another" means that a conceptual metaphor is a systematic set of correspondences between two domains of experience. The word 'correspondence' or 'mapping' is used because certain elements and the relations between them are said to be mapped from one domain, the *source domain*, onto the other domain, the *target*.

Source Domain: This is the conceptual domain from which we draw metaphorical expressions to understand another conceptual domain. Examples of source domains include: journeys, war, buildings, food, animals, plants, etc.

Target Domain: This is the conceptual domain that we try to understand with the help of another conceptual domain (the source domain). Examples of target domains include: life, arguments, love, theory, ideas, etc.

Conceptual mappings between two domains

To illustrate more how the correspondences or mappings are constructed, Kövecses (2017: 14) provides the conceptual metaphor ANGER IS FIRE as an example. Some linguistic metaphors of this metaphor in English include:

That kindled my ire.
Those were inflammatory remarks.
Smoke was coming out of his ears.
She was burning with anger.
He was spitting fire.
The incident set the people ablaze with anger.

Relying on the above examples, Kövecses (op. cit.) draws the following set of correspondences, or mappings:

the cause of fire → the cause of anger
causing the fire → causing the anger
the thing on fire → the angry person
the fire → the anger
the intensity of fire → the intensity of anger

These mappings serve to explain why the metaphorical expressions listed above mean what they do. Why, for instance, kindle and inflammatory mean causing anger, and why burning, spitting fire, and being ablaze with anger indicate a high intensity of anger, with probably fine distinctions of intensity between them.

This can be summarised and schematised in the following way:

Source domain → **Target domain**

FIRE ANGER

Mappings

the cause of fire → the cause of anger

causing the fire → causing the anger

the thing on fire → the angry person

the fire → the anger

the intensity of fire → the intensity of anger

Linguistic vs. Conceptual metaphors

Conceptual metaphors are distinguish from metaphorical linguistic expressions in the following way:

Linguistic metaphors are words or expressions that come from the language or terminology of the more concrete conceptual domain (i.e., source domain). For example, the expressions above that have to do with anger and that come from the domain of fire are linguistic metaphorical expressions. **Conceptual metaphors** do not occur in language but in thought. They are conceptual structures underlying the above metaphorical expressions of fire, which they make manifest by means of language.

The Great Chain of Being Metaphor

This conceptual metaphor gives rise to metaphorical expressions involving animals. In other words, this metaphor uses the source domain of animals (see Lakoff & Turner 1989). For example, human behaviour is metaphorically understood in terms of animal behaviour. This gives rise to the metaphor HUMAN BEHAVIOUR IS ANIMAL BEHAVIOUR. Examples of metaphorical expressions include the following (see Kövecses 2002: 124):

She *bitched* about Dan but I knew she was devoted to him.

His mother was *catty* and loud.

This is a research site. Not the best place for a couple of boys to be *horsing around*.

Good friends *don't rat on* each other.

They had been eating standing up, *wolfing* the cold food from dirty tin plates.

Personification

This kind of conceptual metaphor involves understanding nonhuman entities, or things, in terms of

human beings. It thus attributes human features to things. Kövecses (2002: 35) explains that, in personification, human characteristics are given to nonhuman entities. Personification is used in literature, but it is also abundant in everyday language. The following are some examples of personification:

His theory *explained* to me the behaviour of chickens raised in factories.

Life has *cheated* me.

Inflation *is eating up* our profits.

Cancer finally *caught up* with him.

The computer *went* dead on me.

Theory, life, inflation, cancer, computer are not humans, but they are given features of human beings, such as *explaining, cheating, eating, catching up,* and *dying*. Personification makes use of the source domain HUMAN to understand non-human entities

Although Conceptual Metaphor Theory has significant influence upon scholars, it has received criticism. Important criticism directed to the theory concerns methodological issues relating to the procedure of identification of metaphors in discourse, on the one hand, and to the study of metaphor which should be based on real data (rather than just lexical or intuitive data), on the other hand.

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Practice Question

How does cognitive linguistics view the relationship between language, thought, and human experience?