King Saud University

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Introduction to Linguistics

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Definition and Branches

I Linguistics: Definition and Branches

What is Linguistics?

Linguistics is the scientific study of language.

Why is it a "scientific" study?

It is a scientific study because it is:

1. Formal → Linguistics is concerned with observable data (i.e., accessible to human senses and perceivable by the brain - sounds, words, sentences).

2. Empirical → The statements linguists make about language can be tested. These statements are descriptive and not prescriptive. This means they describe language the way it is actually used, and not the way it should be used.

3. Objective → The claims made by linguists must be objective, and devoid of any personal opinions or preferences.

4. Precise → The statements linguists make about language must be accurate.

5. Exhaustive → Linguistics must investigate all the different aspects of language covering all levels of analysis and providing accurate information of the linguistic data available.

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Branches of Linguistics

Linguistics is concerned with the study of the different components of language. It is a system of systems. Each system deals with a different component of language. The language components are:

1. The level of sounds

2. The level of sound combinations

3. The level of words

4. The level of sentences (i.e., the meaningful combinations of words)

5. The level of meaning

→   Each of these components is studied by a different branch of core linguistics.

1. Phonetics studies sounds

Phonetics is the study of the production and perception of speech sounds. It is concerned with the sounds of language, how these sounds are articulated, and how the hearer perceives them.

There are three sub-disciplines of phonetics:

a. *Articulatory Phonetics:* the production of speech sounds

b. *Acoustic Phonetics:* the analysis of the physical properties of the sound waves we produce when we speak

c. *Auditory Phonetics:* the study of the perception of speech sounds

2. Phonology studies the meaningful combinations of sounds

Phonology is the study of the sound patterns of language. It deals with how sounds are organized and combined in a language, as well as how speech sounds interact with each other when they are combined in certain ways.

➜ *Note the difference between phonetics and phonology is:*

- Phonetics is general. It deals with all the sounds the human vocal tract is capable of producing regardless of a specific language.

- Phonology is language specific. It deals with how sounds function in a certain language.

3. *Morphology studies words*

Morphology is the study of words, word formation processes, and the internal structure of words. It basically examines how words are created from smaller units and the rules that control these combinations.

4. *Syntax studies sentences (i.e., the meaningful combinations of words)*

Syntax is the study of sentence structure. It describes the rules that control sentence formation in a particular language.

5. *Semantics studies meaning*

Semantics is the study of meaning.

6. *Pragmatics* studies how language is used in context.

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Some other disciplines related to linguistics are …

1. *Applied Linguistics:* The way in which people teach and learn language.

2. *Sociolinguistics:* Sociolinguistics is the study of the social aspect of language, or the study of language in social contexts.

3. *Neurolinguistics:* Neurolinguistics is the study of how language is represented in the brain.

4. *Psycholinguistics:* Psycholinguistics is the study of how language is processed.

5. *Discourse Analysis:* Discourse analysis is the linguistic analysis of text.

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Synchronic vs. Diachronic Linguistics

Synchronic and diachronic linguistics are two different approaches to the study of language….

Synchronic Linguistics

Synchronic linguistics is the investigation of a language at a certain period of time. Any relationships between the units under investigation and previous forms or units are irrelevant when a synchronic approach is applied.

Diachronic Linguistics

Diachronic linguistics is concerned with the development of a language over different stages in history.

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Human and Animal

Language

II. Human Language

Linguistically speaking, no language is superior to another

All languages have constraints within their phonemic sequence

Grammatical categories and rules in many languages are universal

Every normal child is capable of acquiring his or her native language

Languages undergo changes through time.

Animal Language

Birds, bees, dolphins, crabs, spiders and most other creatures communicate in some way, but the information they impart is very limited and stimulus-bound.

The system of language consisting of intricate mental grammars, non-stimulus bound and which produce infinite messages, is unique to human species.

―Talking‖ birds can only imitate sounds but cannot segment these sounds into smaller units nor understand what they are imitating or produce new messages to convey their thoughts.

All species have the ability to communicate with one another using sounds, gestures, calls, signals, etc.

Examples: bees, spiders, whales, etc.

Thus, all species use some form of language. The use of "language" here refers to a system of communication. However, observations of different types of animals have indicated that these communication systems are fixed and finite. The number of messages that can be conveyed is finite, and the messages are stimulus controlled.

Note:

If animals learn to imitate human speech sounds (e.g., parrots), that does not mean they *understand* what they are saying!

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1st and 2nd Language Acquisition

III. First Language Acquisition

The study of language acquisition is about how children acquire the grammar which provides a foundation for their ability to speak and interpret verbal messages. How do children all the rules of the language they are exposed to?

Developmental Milestones in Language Learning

Babies go through the crying, cooing, and babbling stage which some psychologists and linguists claim carry specific functions. One function is to provide practice for later speech. Another is to provide a means for socialization between the child and the others in his or her environment. Others claim that babbling is related to biological maturation, an early sign of when a child's brain reaches a critical level of development that predisposes the child to language. Whatever the reasons, it is clear that children are able to process complex linguistic input early on in life and continue to proceed at a relatively fast pace.

Despite the many different age range, all children go through similar first language acquisition stages, no matter what their first language may be.

Examples of children's acquisition of phonology, morphology, syntax, semantics will be discussed when each section of linguistics is studied.

Second Language Acquisition

Second language learners progress through similar second language developmental stages, and some of the patterns of errors are similar to those of children acquiring English as their first language.

Developmental Milestones in Second Language

In the comprehension stage, known as the silent period or preproduction stage, the learner simply listens and absorbs the sounds and rhythms of the new language. Once they are familiar with the speech sounds of the new language, they will start to pick up isolated specific words in the perceived strings of new and unfamiliar sounds. They are also internalizing knowledge of what makes an acceptable sentence in a new language.

After the silent period, learners will go through early production (one or two-word stage), speech emergence (phrases and short sentences), and intermediate fluency (begin to engage in discourse). Examples of second language learners' acquisition of phonology, morphology, syntax, semantics will be discussed when each section of linguistics is studied.

Developmental Linguistics

IV. Developmental Linguistics

Developmental linguistics is concerned with the development of linguistic ability in an individual, especially language acquisition in childhood. It mainly involves the stages of language acquisition, language loss, and bilingualism.

First Language Acquisition Theories

The 3 main first language acquisition theories are Behaviorism, Nativist/Mentalist, and Social Interactionist,

Behaviorism

B.F. Skinner (1957) argued that language learning is culturally determined and learned behavior. Behaviorist proponents claimed that learners learn by undergoing training and practice through a series of stimulus and response chains and operant conditioning, all reinforces that motivate the formation of a language habit. In other words, a person's utterance becomes a stimulus which in turn, will initiate a response. This response will then act as a stimulus and the cycle continues. However, this perspective fails to account for how children can produce novel utterances they have never heard before. It also fails to explain instances of regression evident when children are developing their own system of grammar.

Nativist/ Mentalist Perspective: Chomsky's Innateness Hypothesis and Universal Grammar

Noam Chomsky claimed that human beings are innately predisposed to learn language by a biological language faculty in the brain. In other words, Chomsky's hypothesis states that the course of language acquisition is determined by an innate language faculty (i.e., LAD = Language Acquisition Device). *This claim is supported by two facts:*
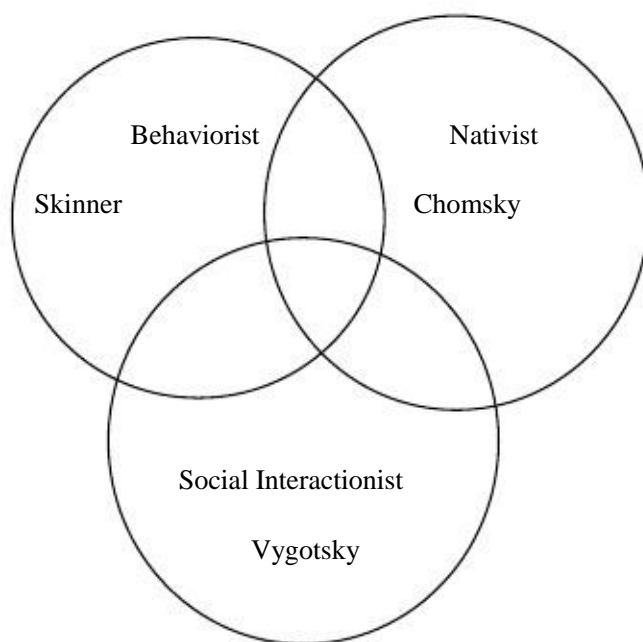
1. Human languages share many similarities even those that are not related

2. The fact that regardless of the language they acquire, children follow similar stages in their acquisition of language.

This language faculty enables children to acquire the language they are exposed to (i.e., their native language). Thus, children born to Arab parents will acquire Arabic, those born to Spanish parents, will acquire Spanish, and those born in an environment in which they are exposed to two languages (e.g., English and French), will most likely acquire both languages.

However, since the innate language faculty enables children of different language environments to acquire the language they are exposed to, this entails that there are common properties that all languages share. The rules representing the universal properties of language are referred to as **Universal Grammar.**

Social Interactionist

Social interactionists believe that human language emerged from the social role that language plays in human interaction. Like behaviorists, they believe that environment plays a key role and that adults in the child's linguistic environment are instrumental in language acquisition. However, there is a difference between the Behaviorist view and the Social Interactionist view. The Behaviorists view the learners as empty vessels into which information must be poured; whereas, the Social Interactionists view learners as participants who are actively negotiating meaning with those with whom they interact. Soviet psychologist Lev Vygotsky (1978) was an influential advocate of this perspective. He believed that learners bring two levels of development in their learning: an actual development level and a potential development level. These two levels are referred to as the Zone of Proximal Development. Through social interaction, adults and peers can assist learners to move from their zone of actual development to the zone of potential development using strategies such as simplified language, discussing concrete topics within learners' environment, providing elaboration and clarification so that learners can understand input provided to them.

Behaviorist

Skinner

Nativist

Chomsky

Social Interactionist

Vygotsky

Core Linguistics
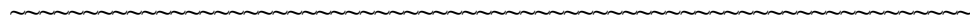
V. Core Linguistics

What is Language?

Language is a set of signals by which we communicate.

Characteristics of Language

Some general characteristics of language are:

1. Language is not limited in time or space → It is not just a vocal system of communication. It is written too.

2. Language is systematic → Each language has its own set of rules, but no two languages behave in exactly the same way. All languages have grammars.

3. Language is arbitrary → There is no relationship between the words in a language and the meanings or concepts they represent.

4. All languages are equal → No language is primitive or inferior. Every language fulfills the needs and requirements of the speech community that uses it.

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Linguistic Knowledge

To know a language means:

1. To know the language's sound inventory → to know what sounds are in that language and what sounds are not.

2. To know the language's sound patterns → to know which sounds may occur at the beginning/end of a word and which sound combinations may occur together.

3. To know that certain forms have certain meanings → to know how to relate sound sequences and meanings.

   Note:

   - Generally speaking, the relationship between speech sounds (i.e., form) and the meanings (i.e., concept) they represent is arbitrary. Basically, words are given meaning only by the language to which they belong. This means there is nothing in the word "cat" for example, that physically refers to the animal cat.

   - Onomatopoeic words are words that imitate the sounds associated with the objects or actions they refer to. For example, meow, moo, buzz, splash.

4. To be able to produce new sentences never spoken before and to understand sentences never heard before, to be able to use finite linguistic knowledge to produce an infinite number of sentences, and to be able to produce sentences of infinite length → to know the rules that enable speakers of a language to combine words to form phrases, and phrases to form sentences in an unlimited number of possible combinations. ***This is also referred to as the creative aspect of language.***

5. To identify which strings of words are acceptable sentences and which are not.

6. To know which sentences are appropriate in certain situations and which are not.

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Spoken Language vs. Written Language

Speech and writing are two different mediums of language. Speech is considered the primary medium of language for the following reasons:

1. Writing is a relatively recent development.

2. Many languages only have spoken forms.

3. People speak more than they write.

4. Speech is acquired subconsciously without effort, while learning to read and write is a conscious and deliberate process.

The table below illustrates the main differences between speech and writing.

Speech	Writing
Composed of sounds	Composed of letters/signs
Perceived by the ear	Perceived by the eye
Uses intonation, pitch, rhythm, and tempo	Uses punctuation and other devices (e.g., italics)
No tools required - effortless	Tools required – produced with effort
Spontaneous	Not spontaneous
Addressee present	Addressee absent
Immediate feedback	Delayed feedback
Context dependent (i.e., gestures, facial expressions, body language)	Independent of context
Changes over time	Relatively permanent

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Competence vs. Performance

→ Linguistic competence is the knowledge native speakers have about their language. Linguistic competence entails:

1. The knowledge of the language's vocabulary, grammar, meaning, and sounds.

2. The knowledge of the rules that govern sentence formation.

3. The ability to pass judgments on the native language (i.e., to identify well-formed sentences from deviant ones).

4. The ability to recognize ambiguous sentences.

5. The ability to recognize anomalous sentences.

6. The ability to recognize synonymous sentences.

7. The ability to recognize negation.

8. The ability to recognize questions.

9. The ability to recognize passivization.

→Linguistic performance is how speakers of a language use their linguistic knowledge (i.e., their competence) to produce language in real life.

A speaker's linguistic performance may contain mistakes due to a number of different elements, such as fatigue, loss of sleep, distraction, hesitation, mood, etc. However, these mistakes do not mean the speaker's competence (i.e., his linguistic knowledge) is flawed or faulty.

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Grammaticality vs. Acceptability

Grammaticality is related to the rules of grammar in their abstract form. Thus, it is a feature of competence.

Acceptability is related to the actual application of the rules within a certain context of situation. Thus, it is a feature of performance.

Grammatical sentences are not necessarily acceptable and vice versa.

For instance, some grammatical sentences are considered unacceptable either because they are nonsensical, or due to the fact that they are too long because of the use of too many embedded clauses.

Similarly, some ungrammatical strings of words are acceptable. These are called **utterances.**

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Sentences vs. Utterances

The table below illustrates the differences between a sentence and an utterance.

Sentence	Utterance
A construct of competence	A construct of performance
Are judged according to grammaticality	Are judged according to acceptability
Described in terms of a certain grammar	Cannot be described by rules of grammar
Abstract – context free	Context-related

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Language and Rules

V I. Language and Rules

Descriptive and Prescriptive Grammars

1. Descriptive Grammars:

When linguists describe a language, they describe the grammar of the language that exists in the minds of its speakers. In other words, they describe the native speaker's linguistic competence.

A descriptive grammar does know tell you how you should speak the language, it describes the basic linguistic knowledge.

2. Prescriptive Grammars:

Prescriptive grammars prescribe the way speakers of a language should speak. In other words, they tell people how they should speak.

Note:

- Language purists believed that language change is corruption, and that it is their duty to prescribe the correct forms of language that should be used. This caused the emergence of prescriptive grammars.

- Linguists object to prescriptive grammars because:

  1. They are discriminating since they assume that speech of a certain group of people is the only correct way to speak.

  2. Languages change and develop constantly. It is a natural phenomenon.

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Language Universals

The theory of language universals is concerned with identifying common properties that languages share. **Generally speaking,** language universals are classified into:

1. Absolute Universals →   universals shared by all languages

2. Relative Universals →   universals shared by some languages only.

From another perspective, universals are divided into three categories **according to their properties:**

1. Substantive Universals:

Substantive universals are the requirements that should be available for the grammars of all languages, such as: vocabulary, grammatical categories (i.e., noun, verb, adjective, etc.), and semantic features (e.g., human, male, adult, etc.).

2. Formal Universals:

Formal universals represent the framework of rules and their application. They are concerned with grammatical, phonological, and semantic rules.

3. Functional Universals:

Functional universals are the constraints that control the application of grammatical rules.

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Phonetics

V II. Phonetics

Phonetics is defined as the study of the inventory of speech sounds, their production, and perception.

In order to study speech sounds, it is necessary to know what individual sounds are and how sounds differ from one another.

Speakers of a language know how to divide the sounds in one word into segments. For example, *bat* can be segmented into *b, a,* and *t.* Speakers of English can recognize these sounds when they occur in other words. Thus, these sounds are considered segments.

A **segment** is defined as an individual speech sound. Slips of the tongue (e.g., saying *melcome wat* instead of *welcome mat)* are evidence that speech segments exist.

Segments are composed of smaller units called **features** (e.g., nasal).

Speakers of a language usually do not pause during speech between words. Sometimes this results in misunderstandings. For example, *grade A* as opposed to *gray day* and *I scream* as opposed to *ice cream.* The confusion that could be caused by the two examples can be clarified in writing or through further explanation from the context.

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IPA Symbols

IPA symbols or the **International Phonetic Alphabet** was created in 1888 by the International Phonetic Association to symbolize all the sounds of all languages. Each symbol in the IPA represents only one sound.
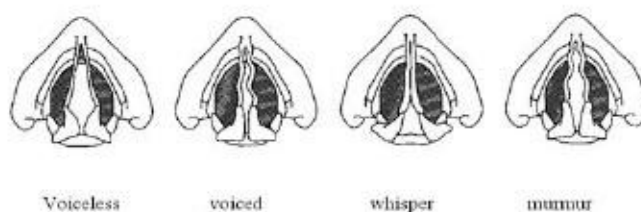
The use of a standardized phonetic alphabet enables linguists to prescribe languages consistently and accurately. (Refer to the attached chart)

The Vocal Tract

Sounds are produced as a result of the passage of air being expelled from the lungs which is accompanied by sound from the vocal cords in the larynx (i.e., the voice box or Adam's apple). The air flows through the different speech organs which in turn shape the different sounds.

The larynx, the pharynx, and the oral and nasal cavities are referred to as the **vocal tract.** Below is a description of the different organs in the vocal tract:
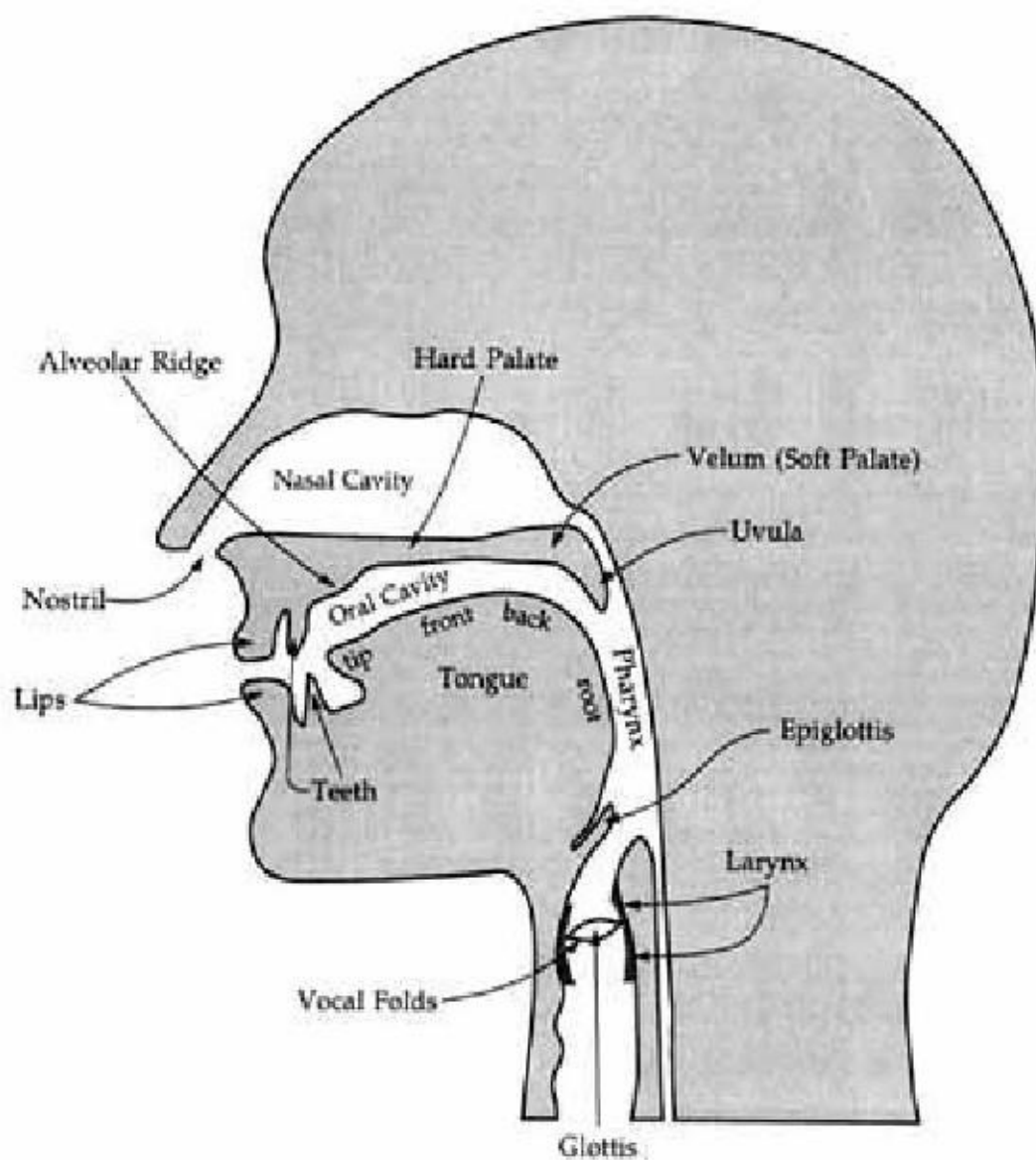
1. ***The larynx,*** also referred to as the voice box or Adam's apple, is a box like structure that contains the vocal cords.

   - ***The vocal cords*** are thin sheets of muscle that can be pulled apart or drawn closer together. The space between the vocal cords is called the glottis.

   - ***The glottis*** is the space between the vocal cords. Depending on the position of the vocal cords (i.e., whether they are pulled apart or drawn closer together), the glottis has a number of different states called glottal states. Such as:

     a. ***Voicelessness:*** Sounds produced with the vocal cords being pulled apart are voiceless sounds. The air flows freely between the vocal cords and no vibrations are felt in the larynx when a voiceless sound is produced.

     b. ***Voicing:*** Sounds produced with the vocal cords being brought closer together, ***but not tightly closed,*** are voiced sounds. During the production of voiced sounds, the air is forced through the small space between the vocal cords. Thus, they start to vibrate. These vibrations can be felt in the larynx.

Voiceless   voiced   whisper   mumur

source: O'Grady, William D., Michael Dobrovolsky & Francis Katamba, [ed.], (2001)

Contemporary Linguistics, Longman. (ISBN 0582246911)

2. ***The Pharynx*** is the area of the throat between the uvula and the larynx.

3. ***The Oral Cavity*** is composed of the lips, the teeth, the tongue, the alveolar ridge, the palate, the velum, and the uvula.

4. ***The Nasal Cavity***

Alveolar Ridge

Hard Palate

Velum (Soft Palate)

Uvula

Nasal Cavity

Oral Cavity

Nostril

front   back

tip

Pharynx

root

Lips

Tongue

Epiglottis

Teeth

Larynx

Vocal Folds

Glottis

Syllabic vs. Non-Syllabic Sounds

Syllabic sounds are those sounds that form the nucleus of syllables because they tend to be louder and longer lasting than other sounds (i.e., more sonorous).

Non-syllabic sounds, on the other hand, do not form the nucleus o syllables.

Oral vs. Nasal

The difference between oral sounds and nasal sounds is:

- In the production of oral sounds, the velum is raised cutting off the airflow through the nasal cavity. So, the air exits through the mouth.

- In nasal sounds the velum is lowered which allows air to flow through the nasal cavity.

Both consonants and vowels can be nasal. Nasal sounds are generally voiced.

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Vowels, Consonants, and Glides

Sounds are divided into: vowels, consonants, and glides. This division is based on the general properties the sounds share.

A. Vowels

Vowels are produced by varying the placement of the tongue and the shaping of the lips. Thus, vowels are described according to the following features:

1. Tongue Height →   The tongue can either be in a high, med, or low position.

2. Tongue Position →   The tongue can be towards the front of the mouth, in the center of the mouth, or at the back of the mouth.

3. Lip Shape →   The lips are rounded, unrounded/spread, or neutral.

4. Tense vs. Lax →   Long vowels are tense, while short vowels are lax.

The characteristics of vowels are:

- They are generally voiced

- They are produced with little obstruction in the vocal tract

- They are more sonorous than other sounds (i.e., they are louder and longer lasting)
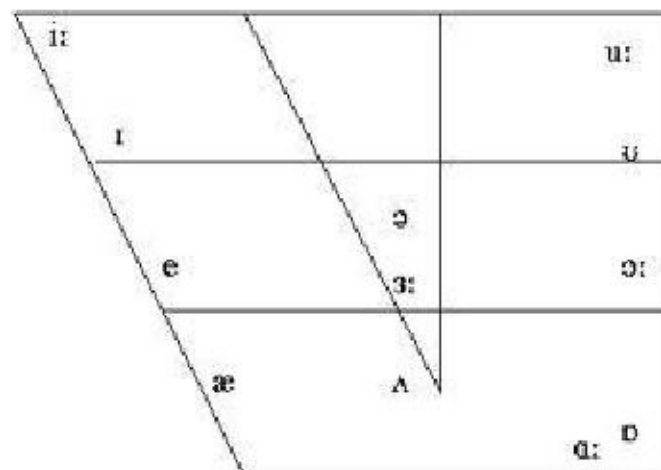
- They are syllabic

Chart of English Vowels

		Front	Central	Back
High	Tense	i (beat)		u (boot)
	Lax	I (bit)		ʊ (book)
Mid	Tense	e (bait)		o (boat)
	Lax	ɛ (bet)	ʌ (but) ə (about)	ɔ (paw)*
Low		æ (bat)		ɑ (pot)

*(not in all dialects)

B. Consonants

The characteristics of consonants are:

- They can be voiced or voiceless

- They are produced with complete or partial obstruction in the vocal tract

- They are non-syllabic

C. Glides

A glide is considered a rapidly articulated vowel. In the production of glides, the initial stages are similar to the articulation of a vowel that quickly moves to another articulation. *The characteristics of glides are:*

- They show properties of both vowels and consonants

- They are similar to vowels in articulation, but they function as consonants

- They are non-syllabic

- They are voiced

→♦□○♏♦✠○♏♦ glides are referred to as semi-vowels or semi-consonants.

In English, there are two glides:

Labiovelar	Palato-alveolar	
[w] wet	**[j] yes**	Voiced

Note:

- IPA **[j]** = North American **[y]**

Below is a summary of the major differences between vowels, consonants, and glides.

Oral vs. Nasal	Sonority	Voicing	Articulation	
Oral	More sonorous	Voiced (generally)	Produced with relatively little obstruction in the vocal tract	**Vowels (Syllabic)**
Oral or nasal	Less sonorous	Voiced or voiceless	Produced with complete or partial obstruction in the vocal tract	**Consonants (Non-Syllabic)**
Oral	Less sonorous	Voiced	A vowel articulation that rapidly moves to another location	**Glides (Non-Syllabic)**

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Description of the English Sound System

Sounds are described through the explanation of:

1. Their place of articulation → The organs and places involved in producing the sound.

2. Their manner of articulation → How the different places in the vocal tract are positioned during the production of the sound.

First: Places of Articulation

The different organs in the vocal tract behave in certain ways during the production of speech. This behavior is responsible for producing different speech sounds.

The tongue is the primary articulating organ. It can be raised, lowered, drawn back, thrust forward, or rolled back. The different parts of the tongue behave differently during the production of different sounds (i.e., the tip, the body, the back, and the root).

Following is a discussion of the places of articulation:

1. **Labial →** Sounds produced when the lips are completely or partially closed are called labial.

   - If both lips are used, the sound is *bilabial.*

   - If the lower lip and the upper teeth are involved, the sound is *labiodental.*

2. **Dental →** Sounds produced when the tongue is placed near or against the teeth are called dental.

   - If the tongue is placed between the teeth, the sound is *interdental.*

3. **Alveolar →** Sounds produced when the tongue is brought to touch or near the alveolar ridge (i.e., the ridge immediately behind the upper teeth) are called alveolar.

4. **Palatal →** Sounds produced when the tongue is on or near the palate-alveolar or the palate areas (i.e., the part behind the alveolar ridge) are called palatals.

5. **Velar →** Sounds produced when the tongue touches or is brought near the velum (i.e., the back area of the roof of the mouth sometimes called the soft palate) are called velars.

   - Sounds produced with the tongue raised near the velum and the lips rounded are called *labiovelar.*

6. **Uvular →** Sounds produced with the tongue near or touching the uvula (i.e., the small piece of tissue hanging down from the velum) are called uvulars.

7. Pharyngeal → Sounds produced through the modification of airflow in the pharynx are called pharyngeals.

8. Glottal → Sounds produced using the vocal cords are called glottals.

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Second: Manners of Articulation

The different elements discussed under *Places of Articulation* can be positioned in different ways to create different types of sounds. These configurations are called manners of articulation.

Below is a discussion of the different manners of articulation:

1. **Stops →** Stops are produced when there is complete obstruction of the airflow through the vocal tract. Stops are found at bilabial, dental, alveolar, palatal, velar, uvular, and glottal points of articulation. The following table includes the stops found in English:

Glottal	Velar	Alveolar	Bilabial	
[ʔ] (voiceless)	[k] skill	[t] stun	[p] span	Voiceless
	[g] gap	[d] dot	[b] ban	Voiced
	[ŋ] wing	[n] not	[m] man	Nasal

1. **Fricatives →** Fricatives are produced when the air flows continuously through the mouth exiting through a very narrow opening, which causes an audible noise. The following table includes the fricatives found in English:

Glottal Palato-alveolar	Alveolar	Interdental	Labiodental	
[h] hat [ʃ] ship	[s] sing	[θ] thin	[f] fat	Voiceless
-[ʒ] pleasure	[z] zip	[ð] those	[v] vat	Voiced

Note:

- IPA **[ʃ]** = North American **[š]**

- IPA **[ʒ]** = North American **[ž]**

2. **Affricates →** Affricates are produced when a stop articulation is released. An affricate is basically a stop that is released so that in its final phase it is a fricative. The following table includes the affricates found in English:
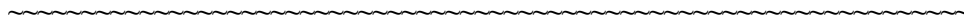
Palato-alveolar	
[tʃ] church	Voiceless
[dʒ] jump	Voiced

Note:

- IPA **[tʃ]** = North American **[č]**

- IPA **[dʒ]** = North American **[ǰ]**

Liquids and Laterals

- Liquids are the two sounds **[l]** as in *led* and **[r]** as in *red* and their variants.

- Laterals are the varieties of **[l]** as in words like: lady, fly, tell, and bold. In the production of laterals, the air escapes from the sides of the mouth because the tongue prohibits it from escaping through the middle.

Suprasegmental or Prosodic Features

Suprasegmental or prosodic features are properties that are involved in the production of any sound regardless of the sound's place or manner of articulation.

These properties are: pitch, loudness, and length.

1. Pitch

Speakers of any language can control the level of pitch in their speech. This is accomplished when the speaker controls the tension of the vocal cords and the amount of air that passes through the glottis.

When the vocal cords are tense and the air pressure passing through the glottis is higher than usual, the result is a higher pitched sound.

Pitch can be placed on a scale ranging from low to high. Vowels, glides, liquids, and nasals are generally higher pitched than other sounds.

Tone and **intonation** are two kinds of pitch movement found in human language.

Some languages are tone languages. This means that differences in pitch result in differences in word meaning. English, however, is not a tone language.

Intonation refers to differences in pitch that do not result in differences in meaning. Intonation conveys general information, for example, in English; falling intonation at the end of a statement signifies the end of the utterance.

2. Length

In English, length is non-distinctive. In some languages however, the production of vowels and consonants is held longer than other vowels or consonants. In such languages length is distinctive. This basically means that if two forms are exactly similar and only differ in the production of a certain sound (i.e., the sound is produced longer in one of the forms), the two forms represent two different meanings/concepts. In other words, they are two different words.

Length is indicated in phonetic transcription using **[:]** placed after the long segment.

3. Stress

Stress is a term that refers to the combination of pitch, loudness, and length. Stressed vowels are higher in pitch, longer, and louder than unstressed ones.

In words, a stressed vowel usually represents the nucleus of a syllable.

In phonetic transcription, stress is indicated by using an acute accent **[´]** for primary stress, and a grave accent **[`]** for secondary stress. It can also be transcribed using **[¹]** for primary stress and **[²]** for secondary stress. In both cases, the stress indicator is placed above the stressed vowel.

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Phonology

VIII. Phonology

Phonology is defined as the study of the sound patterns of language. It is concerned with the way speech sounds are organized and combined in a language and how sounds interact when they occur in certain combinations.

Phonemes and Allophones

A phoneme is the smallest contrastive unit in the sound system of a language. Phonemes allow speakers of a language to recognize differences in meaning between words.

Allophones are the phonetic variations of a phoneme. A simpler explanation is to say that allophones are the different phonetic shapes of phonemes.

The sounds that surround a phoneme are referred to as its **phonetic environment.**

Distinctive vs. Non-Distinctive Sounds

Sounds are distinctive if they distinguish forms with different meanings from each other. For example, **[m]** and **[n]** contrast in the words *sum* and *sun.* Thus, they are distinctive sounds.

Minimal Pairs

The best way to indicate whether or not a sound is distinctive is **the minimal pair test.** A minimal pair consists of two forms with distinct meanings that differ by only one phoneme found in the same position in each form.

Some examples of minimal pairs:

- *Sum* and *sun*

- *Pat* and *pad*

- **Fat** and **vat**

- **Thigh** and **thy**

- **Wet** and **yet**

Complementary Distribution

Complementary distribution is the mutually exclusive relationship between two phonetically similar segments. In other words, when sounds are in complementary distribution, one sound exists in an environment in which the other segment never occurs.

For example, **[l]** has two variations (i.e., allophones) that are in complementary distribution. When **[l]** occurs after a voiceless stop (i.e., after **[p]** or **[k]),** it is voiceless (e.g., clap, play, etc.). However, in all other positions, **[l]** is always voiced (e.g., blue, slip, tell, leaf). Voiced **[l]** never occurs after voiceless stops.

The example above illustrates that voiced **[l]** and voiceless **[l̥]** are in complementary distribution because they are mutually exclusive (i.e., they do not occur interchangeably in each other's phonetic environments).

Phonetic vs. Phonemic Transcription

Phonetic transcription provides a detailed transcription of the pronunciation of a form. This means it includes all additional information such as nasalization, aspiration, and voicelessness. It includes allophones. Phonetic transcription is also indicated between square brackets ([]).

Phonemic transcription provides a basic transcription of a form. It does not include any details. It only includes the phonemes representing a form. Phonemic transcription is indicated between slashes (//).

Some examples of phonetic and phonemic transcription:

Phonetic transcription	Phonemic Transcription	Word
[t ʰaɪd]	**/taɪd/**	tied
[pl̥ aʊ]	**/plaʊ/**	plough
[let]	**/let/**	let

~~~~~~

Phonological Processes

Phonological processes are a group of processes in which sounds are influenced by the sounds that occur next to them (i.e., the sounds in their phonetic environment).

A. Assimilation

Assimilation refers to a number of processes in which sounds influence other sounds. In assimilation, sounds become more alike. Assimilation can be in the place of articulation or in the manner of articulation (e.g., nasalization and voicing). The following processes are all types of assimilation:

1. Assimilation of Place of Articulation

Assimilation of place of articulation occurs in the negative forms of words like *possible, tolerable,* and *responsible.* For these words, the negative form is formed by adding a prefix. The prefix is always similar in place of articulation to the initial sound of each word. Thus, *possible* becomes *impossible, tolerable* becomes *intolerable,* and *responsible* becomes *irresponsible.*

2. Nasalization

Nasalization is a type of assimilation in which vowels are nasalized when they occur before nasal consonants. The following symbol is added above nasalized vowels **[˜].**

3. Voicing

In some languages, voiceless consonants acquire voice if they occur next to a voiced sound.

4. Devoicing

Devoicing is a kind of assimilation that occurs when liquids and glides, which are originally voiced, occur after voiceless stops (e.g., please, proud, and pure). In these environments, liquids and glides become devoiced.

5. Flapping

Flapping occurs in some North American English accents when **[t]** and **[d]** occur between two vowels, the first of which is stressed. In this environment, they are pronounced as a flap **[r].**

B. Dissimilation

In dissimilation, sounds become less alike. For example, the final consonant cluster in the word *fifths* is sometimes pronounced **[fts]**.

C. Deletion

Deletion usually occurs in everyday rapid speech. In this case, some sound segments are removed. For example, sometimes speakers pronounce *fifths* without the [θ]. Also, *clothes* is usually pronounced without the [ð].

In some words, the deleted segment is a vowel. In this case the process is referred to as **vowel reduction.** For example, *parade* and *correct.*

D. Epenthesis

In epenthesis, a segment is inserted within an existing string of sounds. For example, in some American English pronunciations a **[p]** is inserted between the **[m]** and the **[θ]** in words like *warmth* and *something.*

E. Metathesis

In metathesis, sound segments are reordered in pronunciation. For example, the words *prescription* and *prescribe* are commonly pronounced *perscription* and *perscribe* respectively.

F. Aspiration

Aspiration occurs when voiceless stops in word-initial positions are followed by a vowel. Aspiration (in English) refers to the small puff of air that accompanies the production of a sound.

To symbolize aspirated sounds, a small raised _h' is transcribed after the aspirated consonant.

Unaspirated	Aspirated
[spæt] spat	**[pʰæt] pat**
[stʌb] stub	**[tʰʌb] tub**
[skɪd] skid	**[kʰɪd] kid**

~~~~~~

Morphology

Morphology is the study of words, word formation processes, and the internal structure of words.

Word Classifications

*A. According to their **type,** words are classified into:*

1. Content Words: Words that carry meaning/information, such as nouns, verbs, adjectives, and adverbs. This group of words is considered an open class of words.

2. Function Words: Words that show grammatical relations, such as articles, prepositions, pronouns, and demonstratives. This group of words is considered a closed class of words.

*B. According to their **components,** words are classified into:*

1. Simple Words: Words that are composed of one morpheme only. They cannot be further divided.

2. Complex words: Words that are composed of more than one morpheme. They can be divided into their components.

Word Representation

In the mental lexicon, the word's pronunciation, meaning(s), part of speech, and orthography is stored.

However, in regular dictionaries, the following information is generally included about each entry:

1. Spelling

2. Standard pronunciation

3. Definition(s)/meaning(s)

4. Example(s)

5. Part of speech

6. Etymology

7. Information about style

8. Irregular derivations

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Morphemes

A morpheme is the smallest unit of language that carries information about meaning or function.

Free vs. Bound Morphemes

A free morpheme is a morpheme that can occur as a word by itself, for example, *apple.*

A bound morpheme is a morpheme that must be attached to another element, for example, the *plural -s* morpheme, must be attached to another morpheme. It never occurs by itself.

Allomorphs

Allomorphs are variations of the same morpheme. Some commonly used examples of variations of a single morpheme are:

- The indefinite article in English: The form *a* is used before words beginning with consonants, while the form *an* is used before words beginning with vowels.

- The plural morpheme in English: The *plural -s* in English is pronounced **/s/, /z/,** or **/ɪz/** depending on the final sound of the word to which it is attached.

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The Internal Structure of Words

Roots and Affixes

As mentioned above, complex words are words that contain two or more morphemes. Complex words typically consist of a root and one or more affixes.

The root morpheme of a word carries the major component of the word's meaning and it belongs to a lexical category (i.e., noun, verb, adjective, etc.).

Affixes do not belong to a lexical category and they are always bound morphemes (i.e., they must be attached to another morpheme).

Bases

A base is the form to which an affix is added. Sometimes the base is also the root, for example, in the complex word *desks,* the base to which the plural -*s* morpheme was added is *desk,* which is the root in this case.

However, in other cases an affix is added to a larger unit that already contains the root and other affixes, for example, in the complex word *undetectable,* the base to which the prefix -*un* was added is *detectable* which is composed of the root *detect* and the suffix -*able.*

Bound Roots

Some words in English contain roots that cannot be used alone and that do not seem to convey a specific independent meaning. Some of these forms were introduced into the English language from Latin and, in some cases, they did have meanings originally. However, those meanings were lost and are no longer used. For example:

- In the words *huckleberry* and *boysenberry, huckle-* and *boysen-* do not occur in any other words in English

- The words *receive, deceive, conceive,* and *perceive* share a common root, -*ceive.* However, this root does not convey a certain consistent meaning.

- The words *permit, submit, transmit, remit, and commit* also share the common root -*mit,* which, like -*ceive,* does not have an independent meaning.

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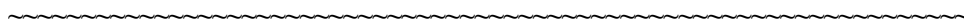
Word Formation Processes

Word formation processes or morphological processes are the processes used to create new words.

Some common processes are:

1. Affixation

Affixation is the addition of an affix to form a new word. There are different types of affixes. These are:

1. Prefixes: Affixes that attach to the front of a word, for example, *in-, de-,* and *re-.*

2. Suffixes: Affixes that attach to the end of a word, for example, *-s, -ly, -ness,* and *-ship.*

3. Infixes: Affixes that occur inside the base of the word. A good example of infixing occurs in the Arabic language. For example, the root كَتَبَ is infixed in the following ways to create different forms:

   كَتَبَ ← كِتَبِ كُ ـ كَتَبَ كُ ـ كَاتَبَ كُ ـ كَتَبَ كُ ـ كَأَكَبَ كُ

→ *Both prefixes and suffixes occur in the English language, but infixes do not.*

2. Word Coinage

Coinage is the creation of new words to refer to products or processes. A major source of coined words is the advertising industry. Words like *nylon, Kleenex, Xerox,* and *Vaseline* are all words that were originally created to refer to particular products, but they are now used as the generic names for the different brands of these types of products.

3. Back-Formation

Back-formation occurs when speakers of a language create a new word after making an incorrect assumption about the morphological analysis of an existing word. Some examples of words created using back-formation are:

- *peddle* from *peddler*

- *swindle* from *swindler*

- *edit* from *editor*

- *pea* from *peas*

- *televise* from *television*

Peddle, swindle, and *edit* were based on the assumption that the -er/-or in the words *peddler, swindler,* and *editor* were suffixes.

Pea was based on the assumption that *peas* was plural.

Televise from *television* was based on the analogy with other pairs like *revise* from *revision* and *act* from *action.*

4. Compounding

Compounds are created by combining two or more words. Compound words are spelled with a dash or a space between the combined words. Sometimes, the words are written as one unit with no space in between.

The combined words could belong to the same grammatical category (i.e., noun + noun). In this case, the compound belongs to the same category, for example, *paper clip.*

Compounds could also be created from words belonging to different grammatical categories, for example, noun + adjective (e.g., *lifelong)* or verb + noun (e.g., *pickpocket).* In this case, the rightmost word in the compound - called the head - determines the compound's broad meaning and grammatical category.

However, an exception to this rule is when a compound is created using a preposition and another word from another grammatical category. In this case, the grammatical category of the compound is determined by the non-prepositional part of the compound. For example, *undertake* → preposition + verb and *sundown* → noun + preposition.

5. Blending

Blending is a process in which two words are combined, but parts of the combined words are deleted. Some examples of blends in the English language:

- *smog* = smoke + fog

- *brunch* = breakfast + lunch

- *motel* = motor + hotel

- *infomercial* = information + commercial

- *podcast* = iPod + broadcast

In some cases of blending, a whole word is combined with part of another word. Some examples:

- *medicare* = medical + care

- *workaholic* = word + alcoholic

- *threepeat* = three + repeat

6. Reducing Words

Another way new words are created is through the reduction of longer words. Three different forms of word-reduction are: clipping, acronyms, and abbreviations.

a. Clipping

Clipping is the reduction of longer words into shorter ones. Some examples are:

- *fax* from *facsimile*

- *prof* from *professor*

- *gym* from *gymnasium*

- *lab* from *laboratory*

- *memo* from *memorandum*

- *piano* from *pianoforte*

- *phone* from *telephone*

- *math* from *mathematics*

- *gas* from *gasoline*

- *bike* from *bicycle*

- *ad* from *advertisement*

b. Acronyms

Acronyms are created from the initials of several words, and these initials are pronounced as one word. Some common examples of acronyms:

- NASA

- UNESCO

- UNICEF

- Radar

- Laser

- Scuba

- AIDS

- SARS

c. Abbreviations

Abbreviations are similar to acronyms. However, the letters in an abbreviation cannot be pronounced as a single word. For example:

- PDA

- KSU

- USA

- FYI

- RSVP

7. Internal Change

Internal change occurs when a non-morphemic segment is replaced with another. For example:

- sing → sang

- foot → feet

- drive → drove

- man → men

- mouse → mice

8. Suppletion

Suppletion occurs when a root morpheme is replaced by another form to indicate grammatical contrast. For example, be is replaced by is/are/was/were according to the appropriate tense. Also, go is replaced by went in the past tense.

9. Conversion

Conversion is also sometimes referred to as zero derivation. It occurs when an existing word is assigned to a new grammatical category. For example:

Converted Part of Speech	Original Part of Speech	Word
V	N	finger
V	N	butter
V	Adj	empty
V	Adj	open
V	N	ship
N	V	walk
V	N	report

~~~~~~

Derivational Morphology

Derivation refers to the formation of words with meanings and/or categories distinct from their base words through the addition of affixes. Affixes that change the meaning and/or category of a word are referred to as derivational morphemes. Some examples of English derivational morphemes:

- *-able:* It attaches to verbs to create adjectives, for example, *adjust + -able = adjustable.*

- *-er:* It attaches to verbs to create nouns, for example, *teach + -er = teacher.*

- *-ful:* It attaches to nouns to create adjectives, for example, *faith + -ful = faithful.*

- *-ly:* It attaches to adjectives to create adverbs, for example, *slow + -ly = slowly.*

Inflectional Morphology

Inflection is the modification of a word's form to indicate the grammatical subclass to which it belongs. Inflectional morphemes in English are a closed class of morphemes that attach to items belonging to specific grammatical categories. They are:

Example	Inflectional Morpheme	Category
Books	Plural -s	
The boy's room/The boys' room	Possessive -s	Nouns
	3rd person singular -s	
She/he reads	Progressive -ing	
He is reading	Past tense -ed	Verbs
She cooked	Past participle -en	
They have eaten/studied		
Smaller	Comparative -er	
Smallest	Superlative -est	Adjectives

Inflectional morphemes do not change the grammatical category of the word they attach to; neither do they change the type of meaning.

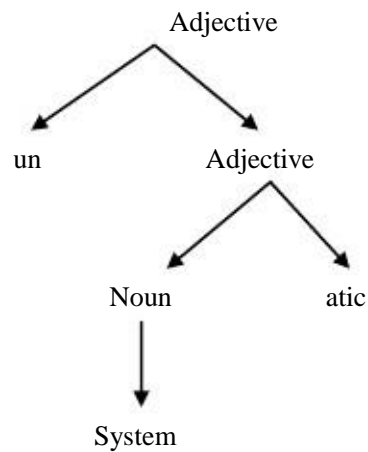*The differences between derivational and inflectional morphemes can be summarized in the table below:*

Inflectional Morphemes	Derivational Morphemes
Only suffixes can be derivational or inflectional	
Never change the grammatical category of the word to which they are attached	Usually change the grammatical category of the word to which they are attached
Never change the type of meaning of the word to which they are attached	Usually change the type of meaning of the word to which they are attached
Combines to the base word after derivational affixes are attached	Must combine to the base word before an inflectional affix is attached

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The Hierarchical Structure of Words

Words have a hierarchical structure. This means that words have internal structures, and that morphemes are added to a word in a fixed order. The internal structure of a word is usually represented using a tree diagram. Tree diagrams show the order in which morphemes attach.

For example, the word *unsystematic* is composed of three different morphemes: *un-, system,* and *-atic*. The root of this word is *system* which is a noun. The suffix *-atic* was added to the root to form the adjective *systematic*. Finally, the prefix *un-* was added to the adjective to form *unsystematic*.
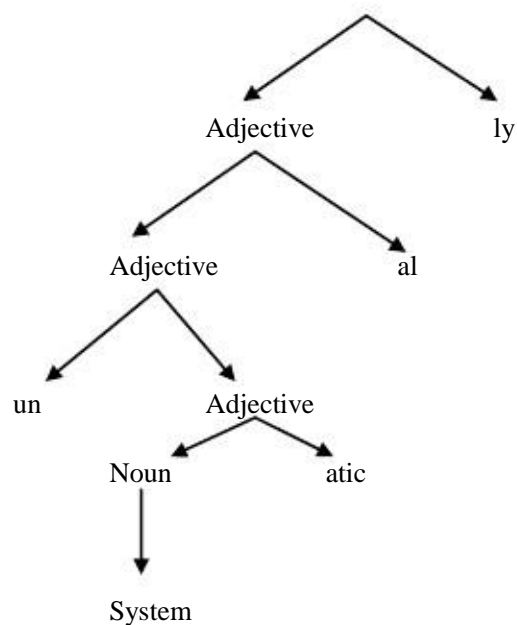
The tree diagram for *unsystematic* is:

```
                          Adjective
                         /         \
                        /           \
                      un          Adjective
                                  /        \
                                 /          \
                              Noun          atic
                               |
                               |
                               ↓
                             System
```

The tree diagram above represents the application of two morphological rules:

1. Noun + atic →   adjective

2. Un + adjective →   adjective

The tree diagram above could be further expanded to represent the internal structure of the word *unsystematically:* Adverb

```
                          Adverb
                         /      \
                        /        \
                   Adjective      ly
                   /       \
                  /         \
             Adjective       al
             /       \
            /         \
          un        Adjective
                    /        \
                 Noun        atic
                  |
                  ↓
                System
```

The second tree diagram above represents the application of the following morphological rules:

1. Noun + atic →   Adjective

2. Un + Adjective →   Adjective

3. Adjective + al →   Adjective

4. Adjective + ly →   Adverb

Syntax

X. Syntax

Syntax is defined as the study of sentence structure. It is concerned with the rules that control sentence formation.

Syntactic knowledge entails the knowledge native speakers of a language have about sentence formation processes and about acceptable vs. unacceptable word groupings.

It also includes the ability to produce an unlimited number of sentences. As well as the ability to both produce and understand sentences never spoken nor heard before (i.e., the creative aspect of language).

Sentence length, like the number of sentences in a language, is unbounded. This means that speakers of a language have the ability to make any sentence they hear/read longer by adding words to it.

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Recursion in Syntax

As mentioned earlier, the length of sentences in English is unlimited. This is part of the creative aspect of language. This means it is theoretically possible to create sentences of unlimited length. However, the constraints of memory and acceptability make such sentences impractical.

Recursion in syntax refers to the expansion of sentences through the expansion of phrases within themselves. An example of a sentence expanded through the use of imbedded noun phrases:

This is the cat that chased the rat that ate the cheese that ……….

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Syntactic Analysis

Syntactic analysis involves analyzing sentences into their components.

For the purpose of syntactic analysis, the sentence will be considered the main unit of analysis. Sentences are analyzed into phrases which can be further analyzed into other phrases and/or words.

Tree diagrams are used to represent the hierarchical structure of sentences and their constituents.

Phrases represent syntactic units and semantic ones as well since they form identifiable parts of the meaning of sentences.
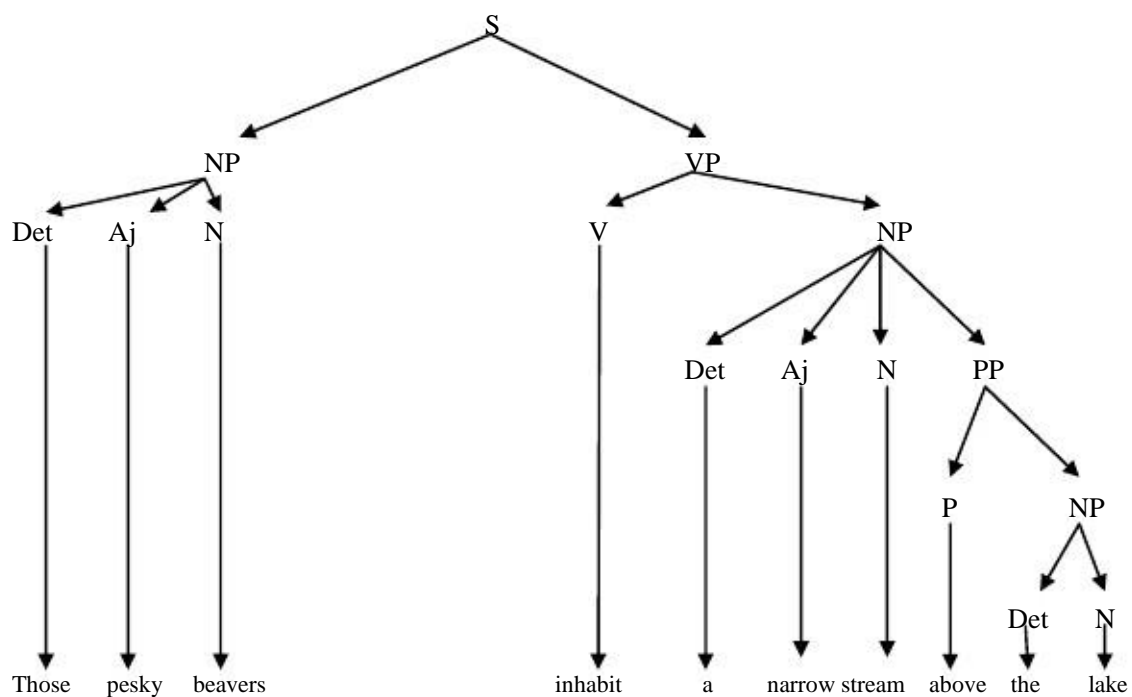
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The Three Aspects of Syntax

Syntax is concerned with sentence structure, and sentence structure has three aspects. These are: grouping, function, and word order.

In syntactic analysis, the three aspects mentioned above are represented in tree diagrams of the sentences under investigation.

1. Grouping

Grouping refers to the grouping of words into meaningful and functional units called phrases, which are members of larger phrases.

In the tree diagram above, the following groupings are recognized:

1. S: Those pesky beavers inhabit a narrow stream above the lake.

2. NP: Those pesky beavers

3. VP: inhabit a narrow stream above the lake

4. NP: a narrow stream above the lake

5. PP: above the lake

6. NP: the lake

Each of the groupings is represented by an independent branch (i.e., node) in the tree diagram.

2. Function

Function is concerned with the relationship of the NP to the verb and to the other words and word groups in the sentence.

For example, in the sentence above, we find three different functions: grammatical relations, parts of speech, and relations of head and modifier.

a. Grammatical Relations

Grammatical relations are concerned with the major types of phrases generally recognized by grammar and apparent in their location in tree diagrams. Traditionally, these include:

- The subject, which is a noun phrase (NP), immediately under the Sentence node (S).

- The predicate, which is a verb phrase (VP), immediately under S.

- The direct object, a NP, immediately under the VP

- The object of preposition, a NP, immediately under the prepositional phrase (PP)

b. Parts of Speech

The tree diagram also indicates parts of speech. Some traditionally used ones:

- Determiner (Det): *those, a,* and *the*

- Adjective (Aj): *pesky* and *narrow*

- Noun (N): *beavers, stream,* and *lake*

- Verb (V): *inhabit*

- Preposition (P): *above*

c. Heads and Modifiers

The head of the phrase is the basic word in the phrase. It is the word that gives the phrase its name (i.e., the noun of the NP, the verb of the VP, and the preposition of the PP). All the other words in the phrase are modifiers of the head.

Note:

This relationship applies to all phrases presented in the tree diagram, except for the sentence (S).

3. Word Order

Word order refers to the linear and temporal order of the words of a sentence. In the tree diagram, linear word order is expressed through left-to-right arrangement of the words on the page, which mirrors their temporal order in speech.

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Immediate Constituent Analysis [IC Analysis]

Generally speaking, there are two different types of relationships that exist between the constituents of sentences:

1. Two-way function/dependency relationships

In two-way function/dependency relationships both constituents depend on each other. The following two relationships are considered two-way function/dependency relationships:

a. The Subject Predicate Relationship

Sentences are divided into two main constituents: the subject and the predicate. Subjects are generally used to mention something, while the predicate is used to express something about the subject.

The phrases that usually function as the subjects and predicates of sentences are:

- Subjects → NP

- Predicates → VP

A **subject** can be defined as the noun phrase that is immediately dominated by a sentence.

A **predicate** can be defined as the verb phrase that is immediately dominated by a sentence.

Subjects and predicates are mutually dependent. In other words, a NP only functions as a subject in the presence of a VP predicate. Similarly, a VP only functions as a predicate in the presence of a NP subject. Both of them are required to form a complete well-formed sentence.

b. The Head and Compliment Relationship

The relationship of **complementation** entails a dependency relationship between constituents. For example, in the sentence *Young children are playing in the playground,* the phrase *in the playground* is used to add information about the location of the action.

The element *in* is considered the head of the phrase because it is responsible for the expression of spatial orientation or location. In this case, the word *in* is considered the head of the phrase.

The phrase *the playground,* on the other hand, is considered the complement.

The relationship of head and compliment is a two-way function/dependency. Neither parts of the phrase can be omitted to create an acceptable grammatical sentence. If *in* is omitted, the resulting sentence *Young children are playing the playground* is ungrammatical.

Similarly, if *the playground* is omitted, the resulting sentence *Young children are playing in* is also ungrammatical.

Thus, both parts of the phrase are important and cannot be omitted.

Note:

In English, complements typically follow their heads.

2. One-way function/dependency relationships

a. The Modifier and Head Relationship

The relationship of **modification** entails a dependency relationship between constituents.

For example, in the sentence *Young children play in the playground,* the NP *young children,* which is the subject, is composed of two words. In the NP, the word *young* modifies the word *children.* In this case, *young* is dependent upon *children* because it is not possible to omit *children* since the result would be the ungrammatical sentence *Young play in the playground.* However, it is possible to omit *young* and end up with the meaningful and grammatical sentence *Children play in the playground.*

Thus, in the example above, ***the relationship of modifier and head is a one-way function/dependency.*** *Young* depends on *children* but not vice-versa. This function is called modification. The function of *young* is to modify *children.*

In the example, *children* is called the head of the phrase because it is the modified elements that is essential to the phrase, while *young* is the modifier.

Note:

In English, modifiers can precede or follow their heads.

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Abstractness of Syntax

The abstractness of syntax refers to the fact that constituents (i.e., the elements composing a phrase) and their functions are not made apparent in speech by pauses or other pronunciation signals, nor are they marked in writing by punctuation. This means that these divisions and categorizations are abstract.

Syntactic Knowledge

Knowledge of the rules that control sentence formation entails knowledge of the following:

1. Knowledge of Constituents

2. Knowledge of Functions

First: Knowledge of Constituents

Constituent knowledge entails the knowledge native speakers have about how words are grouped into units in language. This knowledge also entails that speakers of a language know the boundaries of these units, how they are used, and how they function.

There are three kinds of tests for groups and their constituents (i.e., constituency tests). These are: replacement, movement.

1. Replacement

Replacement means that a group of words can be replaced by a single word. Some examples from English:

- **A sentence may be replaced by a noun or pronoun:**

  I said *I liked it.* I said *nothing.*

  I said *I like it.* I said *so.*

  Water is composed of Hydrogen and Oxygen. This is true, but ….

- **A noun phrase may be replaced by a pronoun:**

  Your son hit the boy. *He* hit the boy.

  -

  -

- **A verb phrase may be replaced by a form of the verb do:**

  Who *hit the boy?* Your son *did.*

   Cats *chase mice.* They *do?*

- **A prepositional phrase may be replaced by an adverb:**

  I waited *at the corner of Olaya and Orouba.* I waited *there.*

  You finally arrived *in the afternoon.* You arrived *then.*

  Please, put the bags *on the table.* Please, put the bags *here.*

The examples above are evidence that groupings exist in English and that these groupings can be replaced by words.

The examples also indicate that groupings of words may perform certain functions. For example, when a whole clause (i.e., sentence) was replaced by a noun, this means clauses may function as nouns.

Replacement may not be possible with all phrases. However, only phrases can be replaced (i.e., non-phrases or parts of phrases cannot be replaced).

2. Movement

Movement refers to the fact that phrases can be moved to different places in different versions of a sentence. For example:

> Muslim men perform Friday Prayer at the Mosque on Friday.

The different possible versions of the sentence above are:

- It is *muslim men* who perform Friday Prayer at the Mosque on Friday.

- It is *Friday Prayer* that muslim men perform at the Mosque on Friday.

- It is *at the Mosque* that muslim men perform Friday Prayer on Friday.

- It is *on Friday* that muslim men perform Friday Prayer at the Mosque.

The sentences above are all derived from the main sentence *Muslim men perform Friday Prayer at the Mosque on Friday.* We can consider the sentences paraphrases of the main sentence. The examples are evidence that groups of words (i.e., phrases) can be moved and are treated as independent units.

Movement, like replacement, may not occur with all phrases, but it will never be possible to move a non-phrase.

Second: Knowledge of Functions

Knowledge of functions entails the knowledge native speakers have about how constituents function in language. This knowledge is innate and abstract.

Evidence that functional knowledge exists is revealed in various ways. For example:

- Knowledge of subjects is revealed when speakers of English follow rules of subject-verb agreement:

  … a book is…, but *… books are…*

  … She eats…., but *… They eat…*

- Knowledge of heads and modifiers is revealed when speakers of English produce sentences like: *the students in the classroom are …* because speakers of English know that *the students* is the head and *classroom* is part of a compliment phrase, they use the verb *are* and not *is.*

- Knowledge of parts of speech is revealed when speakers of English use determiners with nouns not with verbs, and auxiliary (i.e., helping) verbs with verbs not with nouns. For example, saying *the classroom* not *have classroom,* and *have visited* not *the visited.*

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Types of Ambiguity

Ambiguity is when a word, phrase, or sentence has two possible meanings.

1. Lexical Ambiguity

When ambiguity occurs in the same word, for example, the word *wind* conveys two different meanings: 1) as in: It is very windy today, and 2) as in: The road winds through the forest..

2. Grouping Ambiguity

Grouping ambiguity, on the other hand, is when the same string of words may have two meanings based on the different possible groupings of words. For example:

- *Nutritious food and drink* is a noun phrase with two possible meanings: 1) both the food and the drink are nutritious, or 2) only the food is nutritious.

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3. Functional Ambiguity

Functional ambiguity is caused by an ambiguous function. In this case, there are two meanings as a result of a certain element having two different grammatical functions. Some examples:

- I need a criminal lawyer.

- Visiting professors can be boring.

- I like ice cream more than you.

Semantics

Semantics is the study of the meaning of words, phrases, and sentences. The three areas of Semantics that will be discussed are:

> 1. The semantic relationship between words,
>
> 2. The semantic relationship between words and syntactic structures,
>
> 3. Language as an expression of culture and worldview.

Semantic relationships between words

One method used to analyze semantic features that comprise words is called lexical decomposition.

Other types of semantic relationships between words synonymy, antonymy, entailment, referent, extension and prototype.

Synonymy—different words with the same meanings, e.g. sofa and couch; attack and charge

Antonyms— words with opposite meanings, e.g. complete and incomplete; dead and alive; open and closed.

Entailment—words whose meanings are logically related to previous meanings. For example, a piglet must also have the properties of a pig.

Referent—meanings are determined by the reference of linguistic expression. E.g. if you are pointing to a particular book and said that book is interesting , then the referent of that expression is that book refers to the book you are pointing.

Extension—is similar to overgeneralization. When a child includes kittens, cats, tigers, lions and leopards as examples of cats, the child is extending the referring expression to refer to entities that can be considered the set of all cats.

Prototype---- is when a typical member of the set of all referents of the entity is considered. For example, when a child names a cat or a dog as an example of a pet.

Semantic Relationship between words and syntactic structures

Word order and syntactic structures help determine word meanings and the meaning of a sentence.

The relationship between grammatical structure and semantics can also be seen in sentences where words and phrases can be combined in two different ways, giving rise to two possible meanings; that is known as structural ambiguity. Another form of ambiguity is the lexical ambiguity when a word has more than one meaning that can be determined by its context.

Language as an expression of culture and worldview

Word meanings are also defined by individual and cultural experiences. This is reflected in words that contain connotative or non-literal meanings. Examples are: She is slim versus She is tin, and He is obstinate versus He is stubborn, demonstrate the emotive connotation embedded in words considered to be synonyms. Connotative meanings convey our attitudes toward others as well as how we think about ourselves and our worldview.

Another case that demonstrates how language is integral part of culture is the use of idioms. Idioms or idiomatic phrases have a fixed meaning that cannot be inferred from the meanings of the individual words. Examples of English idioms are: Knock it off, bite your tongue, give you a piece of my mind, the lion's share, building castles in the air.

Other examples of culturally bound meanings are demonstrated in the way speakers use metaphors. Examples of American English metaphors:

Time is money, time is gold, time is running out, time heals all wounds.

In conclusion, to be a fully proficient language user in target language, English language learners must understand words, sentences, and their meanings.

Pragmatics

XII. Pragmatics

Pragmatics is the study of how people use language within a context and why people use language in a particular way.

In pragmatics, context can be divided into 4 subparts: physical, epistemic, linguistic, and social.

Physical contexts refers to where the conversation takes place, what objects are present, and what actions are taking place.

Epistemic context refers to background knowledge shared by the speakers and the listeners.

Linguistic context refers to things that were said previous to the utterances under consideration.

Social context refers to the social relationship and setting of the speakers and listeners.

Direct and Indirect Speech Acts

In 1955 the British philosopher John Austin pointed out that we can use language not only to say things but to perform an act, which makes language useful to us. This act is referred to as a speech act. Each speech act or event involves a locutionary act (the act of saying something) and illocutionary act (the act of doing something).

Grice's Conversational Maxims

A. Maxim of Quantity

1. Make your contribution as informative as is required.

2. Do not make your contribution more informative than is

required.

B. Maxim of Quality

1. Say what you believe to be true

2. Make a claim based on sufficient evidence.

C. Maxim of Relevance

1. Be relevant

D. Maxim of Manner

1. Avoid vague expressions

2. Avoid ambiguous expressions

3. Do not be excessively wordy

Cross-cultural Pragmatics

Pragmatics maintains that language is embedded in a cultural context; social rules governing language use may vary from culture to culture. Every culture has its own way of greetings. Western or American culture way of greeting is ―How are you?‖, Chinese, ―Have you eaten‖ and Malay ― Where are you going?‖. Each culture may find the greetings of the other odd and vice versa.

Another example of cultural gesture that is seen in language is the way people respond to compliments. In the Asian culture which values team effort in the individual's success, the response of a compliment can be seen in the following example:

Native speaker: That was the best roast duck I've ever tasted.

Non-native speaker: Thank you, but my mother and grandmother make more delicious roast duck.

When speakers transfer social rules from their native language to another language, the result may be confusion and misunderstanding on the listeners' part. Thereby, second language learners must learn these pragmatic rules if they want to communicate effectively with native speakers.

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