Chapter 9

Branches of linguistics

The study of language

Linguists are interested in all the languages of the world and in all the varieties that are found, the standard and the non-standard, the prestigious and the stigmatised. They recognise that languages cannot exist in any full sense without people and they are fully aware that, as a discipline, linguistics is still in its infancy. We can ask a lot of the right questions but we cannot always provide full or acceptable answers. Among the questions raised by linguists are: How did language arise? How do children acquire it? Why does it change? Are all human languages related? How can we teach and learn languages that are not our mother tongues? Why do people in all countries and in all conditions have both a language and a literature? We shall start with the first question and then indicate how linguistics has subdivided in the attempt to study aspects of language more closely and more systematically.

The simplest answer to the question: How did language arise? is that we do not know. Nor is it likely that we shall ever know. It has been suggested that our ancestors left the forests for the plains hundreds of thousands of years ago and that their new conditions demanded a much more complex signalling system. Gradually, it is argued, human beings began to use a system of sounds that was not limited by time or in space. By this we mean that human beings would not only make noises in the presence of danger, but learned to relate experiences and even to anticipate them verbally. It is possible that human languages evolved from primitive signalling systems – possible but not provable.

First, our records of language use go back less than six thousand years and these records reveal languages that were just as complex, just as precise, as their modern counterparts. Secondly, all modern languages studied are equally capable of expressing the linguistic needs of their users. People may live in primitive conditions but this does not mean that their languages are simple or lacking in subtlety. As George Steiner (see Bibliography) graphically puts it: 'starving bands of Amazonian Indians may lavish on their condition more verb tenses than could Plato' (*After Babel*, p. 55). Thirdly, although linguists have

studied language for at least three thousand years, we have no comprehensive or totally satisfactory grammar of any living language. And yet children learn the language or languages of their environment easily and completely and, it must be added, without any obvious instruction. Perhaps the best we can do is study today's languages and when our knowledge is more complete we may then be able to offer more comprehensive theories for the origin of language. They will be theories, however, and not answers.

Sociolinguistics

This branch of linguistics concentrates on language in society, in other words, it tries to examine how and why people use language as they interact with other members of their society. Sociolinguistics examines variety in language and has shown that language is not merely used to communicate ideas but also to communicate our opinion of others and of ourselves. Even the simplest utterance such as 'Hello!' can reveal that the speaker wishes to be friendly and informal, and that he or she is probably British (many Americans would prefer 'Hi!'). In considering any spoken communication, therefore, a student will notice that a speaker's language reveals information on his sex, approximate age, regional and perhaps ethnic origins, education and attitude to his listeners. Variation also occurs in terms of the subject matter under discussion: nuclear disarmament will not be discussed in the same terms as neighbourly gossip. Nor will one use identical forms of language with a shopkeeper and a minister of religion. Speakers can also range in formality from the shared intimacy of slang through casual conversation to the stiff correctness that usually characterises an interview. Variety, then, and not unchanging monotony is the norm in mother-tongue usage and so sociolinguistics studies how, when, why and in what ways variation occurs.

Not all communities are monolingual and so linguists have examined language use in bilingual and multilingual communities too. In such communities, one language may signal a degree of education and another may indicate friendliness. The Belgian who switches from French to Flemish is not just showing that he has mastered two languages. He may be indicating his opinion of the listener, suggesting, for example, that he recognises the listener as one who shares his cultural background.

In multilingual communities, lingua francas have often grown up as a means of permitting communication where previously little or none existed. Interestingly, where such lingua francas have developed, whether in Africa, America, Asia, Australia or Europe, they show remarkable similarities. Initially this similarity surprised linguists but

the greater our knowledge grows, the more we realise that human beings are similar and human needs are similar, so perhaps it would be even more surprising if our techniques for communicating proved to be very different.

Sociolinguists thus set themselves the tasks of examining language use, its variation, its development, change and standardisation, its regional and class dialects, its lingua francas, its specialised codes. Much has been learnt, including the fact that we use language as often to exclude others as we do to establish bonds. The greater our knowledge grows, however, the more we are forced to recognise the extraordinary flexibility and complexity of all human systems of communication.

Psycholinguistics

This branch deals with the relationship between language and the mind, focusing mainly on how language is learnt, stored and occasionally lost. The relationship between language and mind has two aspects, acquisition and performance, and the two are intimately linked. What we acquire is the ability to perform, that is, to use language with appropriateness, and performance is essential to complete and successful acquisition. Knowledge of this interlocking relationship underlies most successful language teaching and so we shall return to it in our section on applied linguistics.

The basic fact calling for explanation in this area is the remarkably short time that a child takes to acquire an extensive knowledge of, and high degree of control over, the language or languages of his environment. Expressing this another way, we can say that a normal child of five has, without any obvious difficulty, learnt to control a language that no mature linguist can fully explain. Let us look a little closer at what a child of five can actually do: he can understand utterances that he has never heard before; produce sentences that are totally new to him and to his listeners; and he can use his knowledge of speech to acquire the new skills of writing and reading. He can do all of this because, somehow, he has managed to extract from the speech he has heard the underlying system of the language. Furthermore, he has acquired essentially the same underlying system as all his little friends, in spite of the fact that no two children are exposed to identical circumstances or to the same samples of language.

During the past forty years there have been two main theories to account for the phenomenon of language learning by children. The first, known as 'behaviourism', was fully formulated by B. F. Skinner in *Verbal Behaviour* (1957). This theory claims that language learning in children can be accounted for in very much the same way as we can

account for a dog learning to stand on its hind legs to beg for a biscuit: training, stimulation, imitation, reward and repetition.

The second theory, known as 'mentalism', argues that just as human children are genetically programmed to walk when they reach a certain stage of development, so they are programmed to talk. Research suggests that all children of all nationalities, irrespective of race, class or intelligence, learn language in regular steps, moving from babbling to one-word utterances, then to combining two words until their speech is indistinguishable from the adult norms of their community. Mentalists suggest that language is as natural a part in the development of human beings as the growth of the body. Given the right environment, that is, exposure to speech, a child automatically acquires language. Obviously, if a child is not exposed to language he will not learn it. Perhaps an analogy will help here. A child is not a miniature speaker but a potential one in the same way as an acorn is not a miniature oak tree, but, given the right environment, it will become an oak.

Psycholinguists also attempt to understand dysphasia (literally 'bad speech'), dyslexia (word blindness) and aphasia (the sudden or gradual loss of language due to age, an accident or a stroke). We all have experience of aphasia when we cannot remember the word for something or when we say: 'Put that in the fridge' when we mean the oven or the cupboard. Such slips are commonplace and are made by all users of language when they are tired or tense or getting old. The slips we make are extremely interesting. Notice, for example, that the items 'fridge', 'oven' and 'cupboard' have a great deal in common. They are all nouns, all receptacles for food, all in the kitchen and all with large doors. Such slips suggest that we may store words with similar meanings together. Other slips such as using a word like 'woollen' when we mean 'wooden' suggest that we may store some words, especially adjectives, according to sound.

Psycholinguists have learnt a great deal and are daily learning more about how we use, abuse and lose language. They too have discovered the non-finite nature of language. Some problems have been solved. (Deaf children can be helped to better enunciation if they are fitted with a hearing device shortly after birth.) But each solution has revealed how little we really know about language and how much more research is needed.

Applied linguistics

Travellers have always known that communication depends on the ability to modify language use. Sometimes the modifications required are relatively slight, as when a Londoner wants to get directions from a

Scot. Often, they are much greater and involve the use of a language other than one's mother tongue. People have been learning other languages throughout recorded history and two facts seem to have been known always:
(1) that any human language is capable of being translated into any other and
(2) that word-for-word translation is inadequate. To have a good knowledge of another language means acquiring something of the native speaker's innate knowledge.

Recently, the insights gained in sociolinguistics and psycholinguistics have been applied to language teaching and learning. Courses in English for Special Purposes (ESP) are based on the knowledge that native speakers use language differently depending on subject matter and audience, for example. Therefore, a scientist who needs English will not need to know how to discuss Dickens or diplomacy but will have to learn all the technical terms associated with his profession and the preferred structures that scientists use. Scientists use more passive structures when they write than non-scientists do. It is clearly useful, therefore, to teach passives to scientists who need to learn some English.

Insights from psycholinguistics have resulted in foreign languages being taught to children earlier since we seem to lose our linguistic flexibility at puberty. They have also led to an awareness that the errors made by learners can be useful in suggesting the hypotheses learners make as they master their target language.

Many techniques have evolved for the efficient teaching of languages, techniques involving contrastive analysis (a detailed examination of both mother tongue and target language and the pinpointing of potential areas of difficulty) and error analysis. Others have concentrated on the learner, examining the way he creates successive 'interlanguages' as he moves from modelling the target language on his mother tongue to a fuller control of the target.

It is certainly true that language laboratories and modified teaching strategies have resulted in a better grasp of the spoken medium and in a quicker grasp of the basic tools necessary to permit elementary communication. It is, however, doubtful that any one technique will ever become a linguistic philosopher's stone capable of transforming hesitant learners into fluent speakers. Used by a good teacher any method can produce students who master the intricacies of a foreign language. And no method, however linguistically sanctioned, will work without motivation, practice, reinforcement and, most of all, the opportunity to use the acquired language for tasks for which it would be used by the native speaker.

Stylistics

Few linguists would deny that literature is 'language at full stretch' and therefore less easy to describe and explain than a conversation in the street. Most would also admit that a purely linguistic analysis will never explain why we can be moved by a particular pattern of words – why, for example, we may have little or no reaction to: 'I wish that person were still alive!' and be strongly affected by Tennyson's:

> But O for the touch of a vanished hand,
> And the sound of a voice that is still!

Yet all linguists would claim that literature, whether written or oral, is composed of language and so is amenable to linguistic analysis. Some would even argue that a work which is diminished by a detailed study of its form was not great literature in the first place.

Literary stylistics is the area of study where the linguist combines with the critic so as to achieve a fuller understanding and appreciation of literature, and studies have shown that a knowledge of phonology, morphology, vocabulary, syntax, rhetorical and graphological devices can help to make overt what the sensitive reader of literature has always been covertly aware of. Let us look briefly at some of the literary insights gained from linguistics.

Phonology has shown us how individual sounds are made and helps explain why plosives which are sharp, staccato sounds, are often used to recreate the sounds of modern warfare; and why fricatives like 's' and 'z' are used to emphasise continuous and perhaps sinuous movements. Morphology studies word formation and the art of what is possible in language. Literature often goes beyond the possible, permitting Larry Burns's play with morphemes:

> In my dotage I've become
> Inert, defunct, inane.
> Oh, to be like yester-year,
> Ert, funct and ane again.

and the experimentation of Gerard Manley Hopkins's:

> I caught this morning morning's minion, king-
> dom of daylight's dauphin, dapple-dawn-drawn Falcon, in his [riding

Graphology (the study of conventions in writing and printing) has made us aware of the difficulties faced by a writer who wishes his heroine to speak a rural dialect. If he offers a true representation of dialectal speech he runs the risk of making his heroine appear either

funny or stupid or both. Writers therefore use dialectal markings very sparingly in the recreation of non-standard speech.

Stylistics thus exploits our knowledge of linguistic variety, our awareness of the appropriateness of certain combinations and provides us with the tools necessary to deepen our awareness of literature. It is not, however, an alternative to sensitive intuition, but a means of exploring and reinforcing such intuition.

Summary

As we learn language, we learn to classify. We learn that apples and oranges are fruit and that milk and water are drinks. In linguistics, we use language to classify language and this is by no means an easy task. However scientific we may try to be, we carry to our study many of the experiences and attitudes we absorbed as we acquired our mother tongue. Because of this we can never be as objective about language as we can be about the objects we classify by means of language. Strides have been made in understanding parts of the linguistic jigsaw but so far we have either not collected all the necessary pieces or have not yet learnt how to fit them together so that the complete story of language emerges.

Answers to exercises

Chapter 2

1. (*a*) bilabial
   (*b*) labiodental
   (*c*) alveolar
   (*d*) palatal
   (*e*) velar

2. (*a*) affricate
   (*b*) nasal
   (*c*) lateral
   (*d*) fricative
   (*e*) plosive

3. (*a*) b boat
   (*b*) m mat
   (*c*) f fat
   (*d*) l let
   (*e*) i see
   (*f*) u room
   (*g*) z zoo
   (*h*) r rat
   (*i*) k call
   (*j*) ð that

4. (*a*) b – all the others are nasals
   (*b*) n – „ „ „ „ plosives
   (*c*) s – „ „ „ „ bilabials
   (*d*) l – „ „ „ „ fricatives
   (*e*) l – „ „ „ „ vowels
   (*f*) o – „ „ „ „ front vowels
   (*g*) p – „ „ „ „ alveolars
   (*h*) d – „ „ „ „ voiceless
   (*i*) s – „ „ „ „ voiced
   (*j*) t – „ „ „ „ velars

5. (*a*) *f* is a voiceless labiodental fricative; *v* is a voiced labiodental fricative
   (*b*) *ss* represents /ʃ/ which is a voiceless palato-alveolar fricative
   z „ /ʒ/ which is a voiced palato-alveolar fricative

(*c*) *d* is a voiced alveolar plosive; *t* is a voiceless alveolar plosive
(*d*) *ea* represents /i/ which is a front close unrounded vowel
e " /ɛ/ " " front half-open unrounded vowel
(*e*) *j* " /dʒ/ " " voiced palato-aveolar fricative
sh " /ʃ/ " " voiceless palato-alveolar fricative
(*f*) *t* " /ʃ/ " " voiceless palato-alveolar fricative
dd " /d/ " " voiced alveolar plosive
(*g*) *gh* " /f/ " " voiceless labiodental fricative
b " /b/ " " voiced bilabial plosive
(*h*) *ee* " /i/ " " front close unrounded vowel
a " /ɔ/ " " back half-open rounded vowel
(*i*) *v* " /v/ " " voiced labiodental fricative
w " /w/ " " bilabial semi-vowel
(*j*) *ng* " /ŋ/ " " velar nasal
n " /n/ " " an alveolar nasal

Chapter 3

1. (1) pig, big
   (2) time, dime
   (3) came, game
   (4) sip, zip
   (5) share, chair
   (6) son, sung
   (7) man, pan
   (8) note, dote
   (9) rain, lane
   (10) chin, gin

2. (1) /gəʊst/
   (2) /əmʌŋ/
   (3) /ɪnfɪltreɪt/
   (4) /fɑmjəd/
   (5) /tʃʌtni/
   (6) /dʒʌdʒɪŋ/
   (7) /splɛndɪd/
   (8) /ʌndəpɪnd/
   (9) /θaʊzəntθs/
   (10) /bjutɪfəl/

3. (1) short
   (2) treasure
   (3) cute
   (4) you, 'u', ewe

(5) meat, meet, mete
(6) church
(7) tongue
(8) weather, whether
(9) jazz
(10) everything

4. (1) (*a*) /bɔd/ (*b*) /bərd/
(2) (*a*) /grɑs/ (*b*) /græs/
(3) (*a*) /nju/ (*b*) /nu/
(4) (*a*) /kɑsəl/ (*b*) /kæsəl/
(5) (*a*) /fɑmjɑd/ (*b*) /fɒrmjɒrd/
(6) (*a*) /brɛd/ (*b*) /brɛd/
(7) (*a*) /fɛə/ (*b*) /fɛr/
(8) (*a*) /stjuəd/ (*b*) /stʊərd/
(9) (*a*) /hɔl/ (*b*) /hɔl/
(10) (*a*) /houl/ (*b*) /houl/

5. (1) 'apple
(2) di'vision
(3) 'duly
(4) 'fashionable
(5) infil'tration
(6) lo'botomy
(7) photo'graphic
(8) (*n.*) 'object, (*v.*) ob'ject
(9) uni'versity
(10) zo'ology

Chapter 4

1. (1) equal + ise + er + s (ise+er>iser)
(2) incline + ation (e+ation>ation)
(3) be + friend + ing
(4) trans + port + ation
(5) en + dear + ment
(6) pre + determine + ation (e+ation>ation)
(7) danger + ous + ly
(8) un + believe + able (e+able>able)
(9) protect + ion
(10) de + human + ise*

* For students who know Latin, it is possible to break down some of the above words into smaller units, but our segmentation is sufficient for English.

2. (1) ion (D) + al (D)
   (2) ing (I)
   (3) ise (D) + ed (I) (e +ed>ed)
   (4) ise (D) + s (I)
   (5) re (D) + er (D) +s (I)
   (6) able (D) + ly (D) (able +ly>ably)
   (7) re (D) + s(I)
   (8) s (I)
   (9) pre (D) + ed (I)
   (10) sub (D) + er (D) + s (I) (ine +er>iner)

3. (1) s, z, ɪz – cuts, sees, dances
   (2) t, d, ɪd – looked, rained, listed
   (3) il, im, in, ir – illogical, impolite, interminable, irrational

4. (1) un + *bear* + able – able changes the word class
   (2) *moral* + ise + d – ise changes the word class
   (3) *tranquil* + ise + er + s – both -ise and -er change the word class
   (4) im + *prudent* + ly – ly changes the word class
   (5) *wide* + th – th changes the word class

5. (1) non (D) – some
   (2) ese (D) – many
   (3) ation (D) – many
   (4) ing (I) + s (I) – many + many
   (5) multi (D) – few
   (6) inter (D) + al (D) – few + many
   (7) ed (I) – many
   (8) 's (I) – many
   (9) mid (D) – few
   (10) less (D) – many

Chapter 5

1. (1) (*a*) 5, (*b*) 5, (*c*) 2, (*d*) 5
   (2) (*a*) 5, (*b*) 5, (*c*) 3, (*d*) 5
   (3) (*a*) 5, (*b*) 5, (*c*) 2, (*d*) 5
   (4) (*a*) 3, (*b*) 1, (*c*) 3, (*d*) 3
   (5) (*a*) 3, (*b*) 3, (*c*) 3, (*d*) 1

2. (1) a yard surrounding a farm
   (2) a mouse which lives in the fields
   (3) a girl who is a friend
   (4) a house where the temperature is kept high
   (5) a house in which plays are performed

(6) a man who delivers the post/mail
(7) a coat which protects one from the rain
(8) a worm which produces silk
(9) a boat which uses steam to drive the engine
(10) a house which is built in a tree

3. (1) a ball for the feet (noun + noun)
(2) a house for green plants (adjective + noun)
(3) a saw that is held in the hand (noun + noun)
(4) a life style which is very pleasurable (adjective + noun)
(5) wool that comes from a lamb (or lambs) (noun + noun)
(6) money that comes in (adverb + verb)
(7) man who delivers milk (noun + noun)
(8) what one sees looking out or into the future (adverb + verb/noun)
(9) something to scare crows (verb + noun)
(10) something (usually food) that people take away (verb + adverb)

4. (1) verb, adverb, pronoun
(2) determiner, noun, adverb
(3) auxiliary/dummy verb, relative pronoun/subordinating conjunction, verb
(4) preposition, pronoun, pronoun
(5) conjunction, preposition, possessive adjective
(6) exclamation, pronoun, verb
(7) noun, verb, noun
(8) adverb, adjective, adverb
(9) adverb, adjective, possessive pronoun
(10) pronoun, modal verb/auxiliary verb, preposition

Chapter 6

1. (1) 'three boxes of biscuits': Noun Phrase; 'on the 14th of July': Prep. P.
(2) 'All the children': Noun P.; 'extremely happy': Adj. P.
(3) 'couldn't go': Verb P.; 'to the fête': Prep. P; 'because of her bad cold': Adv. P.
(4) 'To have played football': Verb P.; 'for Manchester United': Prep. P.; 'his greatest achievement': Noun P.
(5) 'will have arrived': Verb P.; 'in Spain': Prep. P.; 'by this time': Prep. P.

2. (1) that they would have enough money (object)
(2) What we heard (subject)
(3) what one might describe as agitated (complement)

(4) all I can remember (complement)
(5) 'Who was she?' (subject)
(NB: 'that everyone asked' is an adjective clause.)

3. (1) Main Cl. I shall always remember; Sub. Cl. what you said = Noun Cl.
(2) Main Cl. everyone was asleep; Sub. Cl. When we arrived = Adv. Cl.
(3) Main Cl. It was; Sub. Cl. what everyone had feared = Noun Cl.
(4) Main Cl. He arrived on the very day; Sub. Cl. when we were celebrating your birthday = Adj. Cl. (NB: 'when' = 'on which')
(5) Main Cl. The hat was the wrong colour; Sub. Cl. which I bought = Adj. Cl.

4. (1) (*a*) Come at eight o'clock. (*b*) Will he come at eight o'clock?
(2) (*a*) Don't do that. (*b*) Doesn't she do that?
(3) (*a*) Try to help. (*b*) Does she try to help?
(4) (*a*) Don't play cricket. (*b*) Doesn't he play cricket?
(5) (*a*) Be serious. (*b*) Can't you be serious?

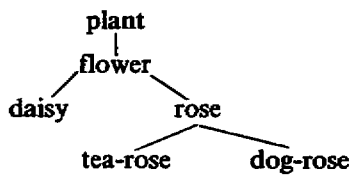
5. (1) (*a*) minor (*b*) simple
(2) (*a*) major (*b*) complex
(3) (*a*) minor (*b*) simple
(4) (*a*) major (*b*) compound
(5) (*a*) major (*b*) complex
(6) (*a*) major (*b*) complex
(7) (*a*) major (*b*) simple
(8) (*a*) minor (*b*) compound
(9) (*a*) major (*b*) complex
(10) (*a*) minor (*b*) simple

Chapter 7

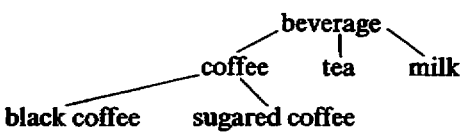
1. There are a number of possible answers in 1(1) to 1(10). We provide only one in each case.
(1) small, very small
(2) regal
(3) concealed parents
(4) bad smell
(5) Show me the way to my home.
(6) stand din
(7) a workman
(8) ignited
(9) dozes (off)
(10) interfere belongings

2. There are a number of possible answers in 2(1) to 2(10). Again, we provide only one of several acceptable alternatives.
   (1) largest
   (2) hot
   (3) warm
   (4) warm
   (5) fair
   (6) bright
   (7) clear
   (8) appeared
   (9) departed
   (10) narrow

3. (1)



(2)



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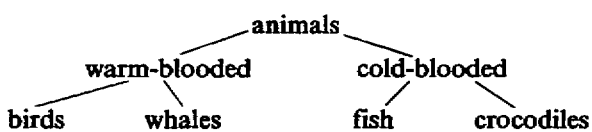

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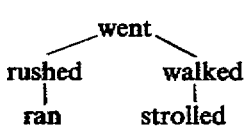


'rushed' and 'strolled' are mutually exclusive and so are 'rushed' and 'walked', 'ran' and 'walked', and 'ran' and 'strolled'.

5. (1) as right as rain
   (2) a blue moon
   (3) by the skin of his teeth

(4) burn the candle at both ends
(5) bark up the wrong tree
(6) cry for the moon
(7) go on a wild goose chase
(8) bite the dust/the hand that feeds you/the bullet
(9) keep a low profile
(10) get to the nitty gritty

Glossary of useful terms

active voice: this term applies to a sentence or clause where the subject is the agent or the instigator of the action:

John cried.

John watched the football match.

John kicked the ball.

All sentences involving intransitive verbs are active:

John arrived.

John ran away.

Active sentences involving transitive verbs can be transformed into passives:

The football match was watched (by John).

The ball was kicked (by John).

The sentences are called truncated passives when by + agent is deleted. Active sentences have the forms:

NP + intransitive verb

NP_1 + transitive verb + NP_2

Passive sentences have the form:

NP_2 + BE + past participle of verb (by + NP_1).

adjective phrase: a constituent of a sentence, comprising a group of words which modifies a noun. It can be either attributive (usually preceding, occasionally following a noun) or predicative (following a verb).

adverb phrase: a constituent of a sentence, a group of words which functions like an adverb.

affix: a bound morpheme that can be added to the base form of a word. Affixes are of two kinds in English, prefixes which precede the base form, and suffixes which follow. If we take 'man' as our base form, we can add the prefix 'un-' and the suffix '-ly' producing 'unmanly'.

affricate: a consonant involving a closure in the mouth as for a plosive followed by a slow release of air producing friction. The initial sounds in 'chump' and 'jump' are affricates.

alliteration: the repetition of consonant sounds in adjacent syllables:

Round and round the rugged rock the ragged rascal ran.

allomorph: a conditioned form of a morpheme. The negative morpheme 'in', for example, can become 'il/im/ir' depending on the following consonant, for example, illegal, immoral, irrespective.

allophone: a conditioned variant of a phoneme. The 'l' sounds in 'light' and 'full' are allophones in English, the former sound always being used initially in words or syllables and the latter occurring in word-final position.

alveolar: a consonant formed by approximating the tip of the tongue to the ridge behind the upper teeth. In English, the initial sounds in 'tap', 'nap' and 'sap' are alveolar.

antonyms: words of approximately opposite meanings, for example 'good' and 'bad', 'young' and 'old'.

applied linguistics: application of the discoveries of linguistics to the teaching and learning of languages.

aspect: a category of the verb which concentrates attention on whether an event is completed (I have read the book), continuing (I am reading the book) or habitual (I read for an hour every morning).

assonance: the repetition of the same vowel sound in adjacent words: How now brown cow?

auxiliary verbs: verbs which help in the formation of questions, negatives, aspect, passive voice and modality. The auxiliaries in English are: BE, DO, HAVE and the modals: can, could, may, might, must, shall, should, will, would.

base form: also called the 'root' and the 'stem'. This is the unmodified form of a word. 'Child', 'see' and 'small' are base forms, 'children', 'sees' and 'smaller' are modified forms. The base form of a noun is identical with its singular: the base form of a verb is the same as the imperative.

base subcomponent: a subdivision of syntax in transformational grammar. The base contains rules which underlie sentences and which give details for specifying the vocabulary of a language.

bilabial: a consonant made by approximating the lips. In English the initial sounds in 'pat', 'bat', 'mat' are bilabial.

case grammar: a grammatical model which focuses on the deep structure relationships between a predicate and the noun phrases in a sentence. Certain relationships such as Agent, Location, Instrument are regarded as being universal in languages.

clause: a group of words larger than a phrase and smaller than a

sentence and having a subject and a predicate. Clauses can be divided into:

(1) Main clauses and subordinate or dependent clauses. In a sentence like:

(I chased him) but (he got away).

we have two main clauses (clauses of equal grammatical weight and each capable of occurring alone). In:

(When I chased him) (he ran away).

we have a subordinate clause (when I chased him) and a main clause (he ran away).

(2) Finite and non-finite clauses. Non-finite clauses contain the non-finite verb forms: the infinitive (to come), the present participle (arriving) and the past participle (taken):
'When I arrived' is a finite clause, 'On arriving' is a non-finite clause in the sentences:

When I arrived I went straight to his house.

On arriving I went straight to his house.

(3) There are three types of clauses:
adjective/relative clauses:

The man (who wore a black hat) was my father.

adverb clauses:

I shall go (if you come with me).

and noun clauses:

(That food prices are high) is an indisputable fact.

cohesion: the means of linking sentences into larger units such as paragraphs. Cohesion may involve noun and verb substitutes, similarity of time references and, in certain circumstances, devices like rhyme, assonance and alliteration.

collocate: occur side by side.

competence: the idealised knowledge of a language possessed by an ideal speaker-hearer.

complement: unit necessary to complete a sentence. Complements can be of several types:

John is a good boy.	—	noun phrase complement
John is fat.	—	adjective complement
John is out.	—	adverb complement

The above are called subject complements because they add to our knowledge of the subject. We can also have object complements:

They elected John Smith President.

He called his brother a fool.

complementarity: the relationship between pairs of words, in which the denial of one implies the assertion of the other, for instance 'male' and 'female'.

copula: verb which needs a complement. BE is the commonest copula in the language but the following verbs can also be used as copulas: APPEAR, BECOME, GROW, SEEM as in:

He was/appeared/became/grew/seemed tired.

deep structure: a notion fundamental to transformational grammar stressing the fact that native speakers recognise two levels of language: the surface structure (actual samples of spoken or written language) and a deeper structure where sentences like:

John helped Mary.

and:

Mary was helped by John.

would be shown to be similar in form as well as meaning.

dental: a consonant involving the approximation of the tip of the tongue to the upper teeth. The initial sounds in 'thin' and 'then' are dentals.

diphthong: a sound involving the movement of the tongue from one vowel position to another. The central sound in 'get' is a monophthong, involving only one vowel sound, but the central sound in 'gate' involves a movement from /e/ towards /i/.

ergative: a term meaning 'cause' applied to the relationship between such pairs of sentences as:

(*a*) The plate broke.

(*b*) John broke the plate.

where the subject of (*a*) becomes the object of the same verb and a new causative subject is introduced as in (*b*).

finite verb: a verb than can take a subject from the pronouns 'I', 'he', 'she', 'it', 'we', 'they'. Thus 'see', 'sees', 'saw', are the finite forms of SEE and 'to see', 'seeing', 'seen' the non-finite parts.

fricative: a consonant involving the restriction but not the total stoppage of the air stream. The initial sounds in 'vat' and 'sat' are fricatives.

headverb: verb which carries the information in a sentence. In a sentence such as 'He was seen', 'seen' is the headverb, 'was' is an auxiliary verb which helps to make the information carried by the headverb 'seen' more precise.

homographs: words which have the same spelling but different meanings and pronunciation, for instance, 'read' in:

Read (rhymes with 'seed') your book quietly.

I read (rhymes with 'bed') that book last year.

homonyms: words which have the same form but different meanings, for example, 'ear' (for hearing) and 'ear' (of corn).

homophones: words which sound the same but have different meanings, for example 'pair' and 'pear'; 'too' and 'two'.

hyponymy: relationship of implicit inclusion between words, for instance the word 'red' includes the colours 'scarlet' and 'vermilion'.

idiom: a group of words whose meaning cannot be deduced from the habitual meanings of the individual words. A 'hot potato', for example, is neither 'hot' nor 'a potato'.

imperative: a sentence giving a command or making a strong suggestions. Imperatives use the base form of the verb:

Come here. Please don't do it.

ingressive: (of sound) made with air sucked in through the mouth.

interrogative: a sentence which asks a question. There are two types of interrogatives in English, those requiring a 'yes' or 'no' answer such as:

Have you seen John?

and those involving question words like 'who?', 'when?', 'why?' which require a longer answer.

labiodental: a consonant formed by approximating the lower lip and the upper teeth. The initial sounds in 'fine' and 'vine' are labiodentals.

langue and parole: terms introduced by Ferdinand de Saussure and similar to the Chomskyan distinction between 'competence' and 'performance'. 'Langue' is the comprehensive language knowledge of a community; 'parole' is the individual's use of language and suffers from imperfections due to limited knowledge, fatigue, carelessness. 'Parole' is essentially the same as 'performance' but 'langue' and 'competence' differ. Both are idealisations but 'langue' is based on the total knowledge of a speech community whereas 'competence' is the language knowledge of an ideal speaker-hearer in a homogeneous speech community.

linguistics: the scientific study of language.

metaphor: a figure of speech whereby the attributes of one item are transferred to another. If we say:

My love is like a rose

we are using a simile. When we say:

My love is beautiful but has thorns.

then we are using a metaphor.

modal verbs: a set of nine auxiliaries: *can, could, may, might, must, shall, should, will, would.* These verbs are unique in the language in terms of their grammar: they come first in a verb phrase, can take 'not/n't' directly, do not show agreement with a subject. They are used to express ability, doubt, necessity, obligation, possibility and probability.

monophthong: *see* diphthong.

morpheme: the smallest unit of grammar. A bound morpheme cannot occur alone. In the word 'books' we have two morphemes, the free morpheme 'book' which can occur in isolation and the bound morpheme '-s' which indicates plurality.

negation: a system of denying or refuting a proposition. Negation is usually marked by the use of 'not/n't' or other 'n-' words such as 'neither . . . nor', 'never', 'no', 'none'. It can also be implied by the use of verbs like 'deny', 'refute' and by adverbs like 'hardly' or 'scarcely'.

noun phrase: a constituent of a sentence with a noun or noun-like word as its most significant element. This element is called the 'headword'. In the noun phrases: 'the good book' and 'my fine friend', 'book' and 'friend' are the headwords. In transformational grammar, a pronoun is regarded as a noun phrase because of its ability to replace other noun phrases.

object: a noun phrase that habitually follows the predicate. We can have both direct and indirect objects. A direct object can become the subject of a sentence when it is passivised, thus:

John planted the tree.

The tree was planted by John.

An indirect object is the person or thing for whom something is done or to whom something is given:

He built his wife a house/He built a house for his wife

'House' is the direct object in the above sentences and 'his wife' the indirect object.

parole: *see* langue and parole.

passive voice: sentences with transitive verbs can have two forms:

John ate the bananas. — active

The bananas were eaten (by John). — passive

Passive sentences allow us the choice of omitting the agent, the person or thing which performed the action.

performance: actual language data as opposed to the idealised competence which is assumed to underlie performance.

phoneme: the smallest significant unit of sound in a language. Different words can be distinguished by the use of different phonemes. In English, /p/ and /t/ are distinct phonemes and can be used to distinguish many words, for instance 'pack' and 'tack', 'pin' and 'tin', 'pop' and 'top'.

phonetics: the study of how sounds are produced and perceived. Phoneticians have created an alphabet writing system called the International Phonetics Association/IPA chart which allows all languages to be transcribed systematically.

phonology: the study of sounds and sound combinations in a particular language.

phrase: a group of words functioning as a unit. In the sentence:

The young boy will be arriving on the next train.

we have three phrases: a noun phrase 'The young boy', a predicate phrase 'will be arriving' and a preposition phrase 'on the next train'.

pitch: speech melody, the normal rise and fall of the voice in speech.

plosive: a consonant formed by a complete closure in the vocal tract followed by a sudden release of the air. The initial sounds in 'pan' and 'ban' are plosives. Plosives are sometimes referred to as 'stops'.

polysemy: this term refers to the fact that one word may have several meanings. 'Chop', for example, means both 'cut down' and 'piece of meat'. Many English words are polysemous, that is, have a range of different meanings.

predicator: traditional grammar often used the word 'verb' in two different ways: to describe a part of speech such as 'Go', 'Come', 'Move'; and to describe the verbal constituent in a sentence:

Mary (subject) loved (verb) cake (object)

The term 'predicate' was introduced to refer to all that follows the subject:

Subject	*Predicate*
John	died suddenly.
John	loved Mary.

The term 'predicator' refers specifically to the verbal part of a sentence:

Subject	*Predicator*	*Object*	*Adverb*
John	died		suddenly.
John	loved	Mary.	

prefix: the affix which is added to the beginning of a word. *See under* affix.

preposition phrase: a group of words in a sentence which begins with a preposition.

pronoun: a member of a finite set of units which can replace nouns and noun phrases. There are several types of pronoun: personal pronouns such as 'I', 'you', 'us', demonstrative pronouns such as 'this', 'those', interrogative pronouns such as 'who?', 'which?', and indefinite pronouns such as 'one', 'some'.

psycholinguistics: the study of the relationship between language and the mind with special attention being paid to the way language is acquired, stored and lost.

relative clauses: adjective clauses often introduced by 'that', 'who', 'whom', 'which'.

retroflex: (of a sound) made with the tip of the tongue curling towards the hard palate.

root: the base form of a word, that is, a noun that is unmarked for plurality or possession, a verb that is unmarked for tense or person an adjective or adverb which is unmarked for comparative or superlative.

semantics: the study of meaning.

simile: *see* metaphor.

sociolinguistics: the study of the ways people use language with special attention being paid to variation within a language.

structuralism: the detailed study of the forms and functions of a language based on the assumption that every language is unique and can only be studied in terms of its own individual patterning.

stylistics: the insights provided by linguistics in the study of texts, especially literary texts.

subject: the noun phrase or subject pronoun which occurs before the predicate in an affirmative sentence, within the predicate in an interrogative sentence and which causes the modification of the predicate in the non-past tense:

The man will come tomorrow.

Will the man come tomorrow?

The man always comes on a bicycle.

suffix: the affix which is added to the end of words. '-ise' is a suffix in 'hospitalise'. *See also under* affix.

suprasegmentals: features of speech which extend over more than one sound. Suprasegmental features include loudness, intonation, stress and speed of utterance.

surface structure: actual samples of language that can be heard or read. Often sentences may look alike on the surface:

(*a*) The child is too small to play football.

(*b*) The child is too small to pick up.

but be fundamentally different in meaning. Sentence (*a*) implies that the child cannot play football; (*b*) that someone else should not pick up the child.

synonyms: words of approximately the same meaning: 'Autumn' and 'Fall', 'big' and 'large', 'adore' and 'worship'.

syntax: the arrangement of words into larger units such as phrases, clauses, sentences.

tense: time markings in the verb:

He sings — non-past reference

He sang — past reference.

Time is not to be equated with tense. Often in English time is indicated by the use of adverbs:

He sings in the choir every day.

He sings in the choir tomorrow.

transformational subcomponent: a subdivision of syntax in transformational grammar. The transformation subcomponent accounts for the transformation of a sentence into variants, such as for example:

The cat swallowed a mouse.

The mouse was swallowed by the cat.

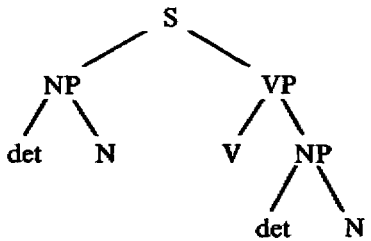
The swallowing of a mouse (by the cat).

transformational generative grammar (TG): a model of grammar which tries to reproduce the linguistic abilities of a native speaker. It tries to explain the creativity of speakers, recognises two levels of language (surface structure and 'deep' or 'underlying' structure) and sets out to explain how these levels are related.

transformations: operations that add to, delete from, substitute for or transpose sentences or parts of sentences. Transformations account for the relationship between active and passive sentences and between a sentence like 'he arrived' and the noun phrase 'his arrival'.

tree diagram: a pictorial representation of the underlying structure of a sentence. The following simplified tree diagram (also called a phrase marker) underlies all active sentences such as 'The boy ate the banana':

S → NP + VP
NP → (det) + N
VP → V + NP



velar: a consonant involving the approximation of the back of the tongue to the soft palate. The initial sounds in 'coat' and 'goat' are velars.

verb phrase: different models of grammar regard the verb phrase differently. In pre-TG models, the verb phrase referred only to the predicate in a sentence; in TG models, the verb phrase includes the predicate and all that follows it. Thus in the sentence:

He may have seen the girl on the train

TG models would call 'may have seen the girl on the train' the verb phrase.

voiced: consonants are said to be voiced when the vocal cords vibrate as the air passes through them. For instance, all the consonants in 'bad', 'good', 'knob', 'then' are voiced.

voiceless: consonants are said to be voiceless when the vocal cords do not vibrate as the air passes through them. For example, all the consonants in 'pat', 'kite', 'sip', 'thick' are voiceless.

vowel: a speech sound made while there is a free access of air through the mouth. All English vowels are voiced. The final sounds in 'tree', 'try', 'true' are vowels.

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Index

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Richard Dutton is Lecturer in English Literature at the University of Lancaster.