

The Neat Summary of Linguistics

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I Language in perspective

1 Introduction

The *goal* of linguistics is to provide valid analyses of language structure. Linguistic theory is concerned with establishing a coherent set of independent principles to explain phenomena in language.

There are no *primitive* languages. Each language is adapted for the community which speaks it, be this industrialised or not.

Onomatopoeia is not a major principle in language although symbols (*icons*) may be present on a more abstract level.

There is no such thing as *correct* language in any absolute sense. Language is *neutral* and should not be the object of value judgements. Lay people tend to confuse language and attitudes to those who use language.

Written language is *secondary* and derived from spoken language. Despite its status in western societies, written language is only of marginal interest to the linguist.

Linguistics is a *science* although the evidence for assumptions about the structure of language is never direct. Linguists are more concerned with designing valid and general models of linguistic structure rather than searching for proof in any strictly empirical sense.

Language consists largely of *rules* which determine its use. There are, however, many exceptions. Native speakers can deal with a large amount of *irregularity* which is stored in the *mental lexicon*.

Knowledge of language refers to many *abstract structures* such as those of sentence types or systematic units such as phonemes or morphemes.

Language would appear to be ordered *modularly*, i.e. to consist of a *set of subsystems*, which are labelled 'levels of language', such as phonology, morphology or syntax.

Most *knowledge* about language is *unconscious* and cannot be accessed directly. The task of the linguist is often to demonstrate the existence of this unconscious knowledge and to suggest methods of describing it.

2 On the origins of language

There is long tradition of *speculating* about the origin of language. Most of this was and is *unscientific* as it does not apply stringent principles of historical continuity and interrelations.

Modern man has existed for about 200,000 years and after 50,000 BC language had developed all the *structural properties* which are characteristic of it today.

Language is an *evolutionary* phenomenon which is continually adapted to the *communicative needs* of its speakers.

The *organs of speech* are *biologically secondary* but their rise has led to a *specialisation* such as the great flexibility of the tongue or the relatively deep larynx which distinguishes humans from higher primates.

3 Characterising language

Linguists vary in their definitions of language. However, all agree that language is a *system of vocal signs* with an *internal structure* and used for the purposes of *human communication*. Language usually has a secondary function of carrying a social message.

The *relationship* between signs and what is symbolised is *arbitrary* but fixed by *social convention*. The system is *stimulus-free* and *non-random*. It shows a *duality of structure* in having *building blocks* (phonemes) and *units* consisting of these (words). A small number of building blocks permits a large number of meaningful units.

Languages vary greatly in their form and this has led some linguists to imagine that one's native language determines the way one thinks. This extreme opinion is rejected nowadays.

4 Structural notions in linguistics

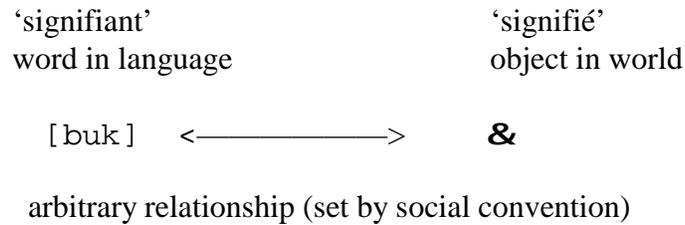
Language can be viewed at one point in time — *synchronically* — or over a period of time — *diachronically*.

diachrony (historical viewpoint)
-----> time axis
|||||
synchronic 'slices' (points in time)

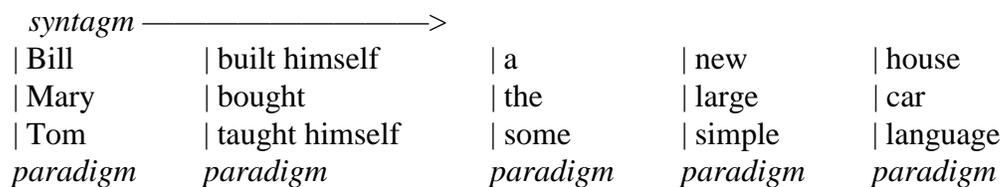
(often the present as in 'a synchronic study')

There is a significant distinction between the act of uttering language — *parole/performance* — and the system of a language which can be seen as the abstract ability of the single speaker to speak his/her native language — *competence* — and/or the communal linguistic knowledge which defines a speech community — *langue*.

Linguists distinguish carefully between the *signifiant*, the sign which describes/points to a *signifié* and that which is signified/ designated outside of language.



The linear ordering of elements is called a *syntagm* and the vertical array of possible elements for a slot is a *paradigm*.



Linguistic levels can be classified according to which they are *open*, like the lexicon, and can take on new elements or *closed*, like phonetics and morphology, which cannot be expanded at will by speakers.

CHARACTERISTICS OF CLOSED CLASSES

- small number of units
- polyfunctional
- acquired in early childhood
- low or non-existent awareness for lay speakers

Elements which are common in all languages are *unmarked*. Those phenomena which occur frequently and which are both found often in language change and turn up early in language acquisition can be called *natural*.

The superfluous — *redundant* — elements of language may turn out to be useful in non-optimal communication situations such as speech in a loud surrounding or at a distance.

4.1 Talking about language and linguistic data

The language one uses to talk about language is termed *metalanguage*. That which is investigated is called *object language*.

There are different methods of collecting object language data: one's own *intuitions*, *elicitation* from other native speakers or the use of a *text corpus*.

5 The grammatical core

Word classes — e.g. nouns and verbs — show similarities in their form and the *grammatical categories* they indicate.

Grammar is a largely *autonomous* system with its own rules which need not be motivated by language external considerations, cf. the gender system of German.

There is some *indirect evidence* for the *reality of rules*. This comes mainly from *language pathology* and the area of *speech errors*.

6 Linguistic levels

Object of study	Name of field	Size of unit
Language use	PRAGMATICS	Largest
Meaning	SEMANTICS	
Sentences, clauses	SYNTAX	
Words, forms	MORPHOLOGY	
Classified sounds	PHONOLOGY	
All human sounds	PHONETICS	Smallest

Bottom-up approach to linguistic analysis

7 Areas of linguistics

Apart from dividing language into various tiers, one can study linguistics from different points of view. Here one is not restricted to a single level so one speaks of a linguistic area. A short list of the most important areas is given below.

- | | |
|----------------------------|---------------------------|
| 1) Sociolinguistics | 2) Variety studies |
| 3) Language acquisition | 4) Language and the brain |
| 5) Contrastive linguistics | 6) Language change |
| 7) Linguistic theory | |

Linguistic theory The history of linguistics is bound up with various theories which have been proposed in the attempt at explaining the nature of the human language faculty. These theories can be grouped into three broad categories which correspond roughly to historical epochs.

	<i>Theoretical orientation</i>	<i>Historical period</i>
0)	non-theoretical studies	Before the 19th century
1)	historical linguistics	19th century
2)	structuralism	first half of 20th century
3)	generative grammar	second half of 20th century

There is a distinction between *general* and *descriptive* linguistics, the former being about concepts and the latter about investigating and describing languages.

Theoretical linguistics develops *models* of language competence while *applied* linguistics deals with the *uses* to which linguistics can be put in practical affairs such as language teaching.

All languages are divided into levels which are the divisions made according to the status of elements — sounds (*phonology*), words (*morphology*), sentences (*syntax*). In addition one has the level of meaning (*semantics*) and language use (*pragmatics*).

Areas of linguistics are concerned with the approach and scope of a linguistic study. This can for example concern social uses of language (*sociolinguistics*), the process of learning language (*language acquisition*), historical processes (*language change*).

Various linguistic theories have been developed over the past two centuries. Three main schools can be recognised: *Neogrammarianism* (late 19th century), *structuralism* (first half of 20th century), *generative grammar* (second half of 20th century).

II The levels of linguistics

1 Phonetics and phonology

Phonetics is the study of human sounds and *phonology* is the classification of the sounds within the system of a particular language or languages.

Phonetics is divided into three types according to the production (*articulatory*), transmission (*acoustic*) and perception (*auditive*) of sounds.

Three categories of sounds must be recognised at the outset: *phones* (human sounds), *phonemes* (units which distinguish meaning in a language), *allophones* (non-distinctive units).

Sounds can be divided into consonants and vowels. The former can be characterised according to 1) *place*, 2) *manner of articulation* and 3) *voice* (voiceless or voiced). For vowels one uses a coordinate system called a *vowel quadrangle* within which actual vowel values are located.

Phonotactics deals with the *combinations* of sounds possible and where sounds can occur in a *syllable*.

The major structure for the organisation of sounds is the *syllable*. It consists of an *onset* (beginning), a *rhyme* (everything after the beginning) which can be sub-divided into a *nucleus* (vowel or vowel-like centre) and a *coda* (right-edge).

Prosody is concerned with features of words and sentences above the level of individual sounds, e.g. stress, pitch, intonation. Stress is frequently contrastive in English.

The unstressed syllables of English show characteristic phonetic *reduction* and words containing this are called *weak forms*.

It is essential to distinguish between *writing* and *sound*. There are various terms (*homophony*, *homography*, *homonymy*) to characterise the relationship between the written and the spoken form of words depending on what the *match* between the two is like.

CONSONANT CHART FOR ENGLISH

	labial	dental	alveolar	palatal-alv.	palatal	velar	glottal
1)	p b	t d				k g	
2)	f v	θ ð	s z	ʃ ʒ			h
3)				tʃ dʒ			
4)	m		n			ŋ	
5)			l, r				
6)	w				j		
	(labio-velar)				(palatal)		

1) stops, 2) fricatives, 3) affricates, 4) nasals, 5) liquids, 6) glides
The left symbol of each pair is voiceless, the right one voiced.

CARDINAL VOWELS In order to characterise vowels satisfactorily the cardinal vowel system was introduced at the beginning of the 20th century by the English phonetician Daniel Jones. The basic principle is that extreme positions for the articulation of vowels are taken as reference points and all other possible vowel articulations are set in relation to them.

The vowel quadrangle used for the representation of vowels is derived from a side view of the oral cavity with the face turned to the left, that is the position of /i/ is maximally high and front, the position of /u/ is maximally high and back while the low vowels /a/ and /ɑ/ are maximal low front and low back respectively.

Front		Back	
i y		u u	High
e ø		ɤ o	Mid
ε œ		ʌ ɔ	Low mid
	a	ɑ ɒ	Low

Note The left symbol of each is unrounded; the right one is rounded. There is a general correlation between unroundedness and frontness and roundedness and backness, i.e. these value combinations are much more common than their opposites.

The following charts are given for the sounds of English; note that the values refer to Received Pronunciation and vary greatly between varieties of English.

VOWEL CHART AND SYMBOLS

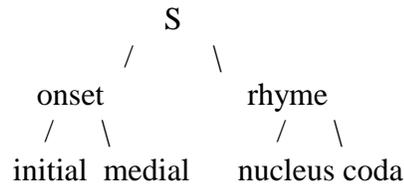
Monophthongs

Front		Back
i:		u: High
ɪ		ʊ
e	ə	ɜ: Mid
	ʌ	ɔ: Low mid
æ		ɑ: ɒ Low

beat /bi:t/, *bit* /bɪt/; *bet* /bet/; *bat* /bæt/, *bard* /bɑ:d/, *bo(ttom)* /bɒtəm/; *bull* /bʊl/, *but* /bʌt/; *bought* /bɔ:t/, *boot* /bu:t/; (*butt*)*er* /bʌtə/, *bird* /bɜ:d/;

Diphthongs rising:	ai, au, ɔi	<i>bile</i> /bail/	<i>bow</i> /bau/	<i>boil</i> /bɔil/
	ei, əʊ	<i>bait</i> /beit/	<i>boat</i> /bəʊt/	
centring:	ɪə, eə, ʊə	<i>pier</i> /pɪə/	<i>pear</i> /pɛə/	<i>poor</i> /pʊə/

1.1 Syllable structure



Example: *pressed*

onset	nucleus	coda	
/p	r e	s	t/
vcl. stop	liquid vowel	vcl. fric. + stop	

1.2 American phonetic transcription

<i>Symbol</i>	<i>Description</i>	<i>English equivalent</i>
[š]	palato-alveolar voiceless fricative	[ʃ]
[ž]	palato-alveolar voiced fricative	[ʒ]

[č]	palato-alveolar voiceless affricate	[tʃ]
[tš]	alternative rendering	
[ǰ]	palato-alveolar voiced affricate	[dʒ]
[dž]	alternative rendering	

On a linguistic as opposed to a purely phonetic level there is a certain advantage to the single symbol representation of affricates as it indicates their frequent monophonemic status in the languages concerned.

		<i>American</i>	<i>British</i>
1)	palatal approximant yes	[y] [yes]	[j] [jes]
2)	front end-element of rising diphthong try	[y] [tray]	[i] [traɪ]
3)	back end-element of rising diphthong bow	[w] [baw]	[u] [bau]
4)	high front rounded vowel Fr. <i>vu</i>	[ü] [vü]	[y] [vy]
5)	high front rounded vowel Fr. <i>peu</i>	[ø] [pø]	[ø]

The diaeresis in American usage has probably been adopted from German orthographic practice; in the IPA this indicates a centralised vowel realisation.

Broad and narrow transcription The transcriptional style a writer employs is usually adapted to the needs of the matter at hand. If one is discussing general phonemic contrasts in a language then it is unnecessary to indicate all shades of phonetic realisation of a segment as this can prevent the reader from seeing the wood for the trees so to speak. For instance in English it is not always expedient to use [ɹ] or [ɻ] for [r] unless one is discussing, say differences between British and American English. This leads, however, to potential ambiguity: on the one hand [r] is used as a cover symbol for all *r*-sounds and on the other for an alveolar trill, which can be contrastive as in Spanish where [r] and [r̄] have different systematic status. For the reader there is no quick and easy solution to the difficulty of interpreting how broadly or narrowly symbols are being used. One has to judge from the degree of attention a writer appears to be paying to phonetic detail. One clue of course is provided by bracketing: obliques always indicate phonemes, segments with systematic, i.e. ultimately contrastive status in a language and are not to be interpreted in a literal phonetic sense. For instance to talk of /r/ in English is quite legitimate without specifying how this segment can be realised in a particular variety of the language.

1.3 Alphabets and sound systems

An *alphabet* is a system of sound representation in writing which is based on the principle of sound-symbol equivalence, hence the letter *a* in Latin corresponded to the sound /a/. This principle may be disturbed by later developments in a language, e.g. *c* in Classical Latin was /k/ but later developed into /ts/ and into /tʃ/ in Italian (before front vowels). Furthermore, languages vary in the choice of symbols for sounds. Thus in English *j* stands for /dʒ/ but for /j/ in German. One symbol can also stand for more than one sound, e.g. *c* in English is /k/ before back vowels, e.g. in *call*, but /s/ before front ones, e.g. in *cease*.

A different principle is used in languages which use *characters* (such as Chinese). In these cases a symbol stands for an entire *word* or at least for a *syllable*. Such languages have a very large number of symbols, as in principle there is one per word, though by means of repetition and combination the number required can be reduced.

Alphabet systems are the most economical and can do with sets of symbols consisting of about 30 (26 letters in English, for instance). Alphabet systems are a development from older pictographic systems in which stylised abstractions were used in writing, e.g. a circle for the sun, a vertical stroke for a man, etc.

The *letters* of an alphabet may have their own names as with the Runic alphabet (early Germanic system in the first centuries after Christ). The forms of letters may vary with no effect on their sound values, e.g. letters may appear in *italics* or **bold** or UPPERCASE.

2 Morphology

Morphology	à	lexical morphology	(word formation)
		inflectional morphology	(grammar, conjugation/declination)

Morphology is concerned with the study of word forms. A *word* is best defined in terms of *internal stability* (is it further divisible?) and *external mobility* (can it be moved to a different position in a sentence?).

A *morpheme* is the smallest unit which *carries meaning*. An *allomorph* is a *non-distinctive* realisation of a morpheme.

Morphology can further be divided into *inflectional* (concerned with the endings put on words) and *derivational* (involves the formation of new words).

Affixation is the process of attaching an inflection or, more generally, a bound morpheme to a word. This can occur at the beginning or end and occasionally in the middle of a word form.

Morphemes can be classified according to whether they are *bound* or *free* and furthermore *lexical* or *grammatical*.

Word formation processes can be either *productive* or *lexicalised* (non-productive). There are different types of word-formation such as *compounding*, *zero derivation* (conversion), *back formation* and *clipping*.

For any language the distinction between *native* and *foreign* elements in the lexicon is important. In English there are different affixes used here and stress also varies according to the historical source of words.

3 Lexicology

Lexicology investigates the internal structure of the lexicon. *Lexicography* concerns the compilation of dictionaries. *Etymology* is about the historical development of word meanings.

A *lexeme* is the minimal distinctive unit in the semantic system of a language. A *lexical set* is a group of forms which share a basic meaning. A *lexical gap* is a missing item in a language's lexicon and *lexical selection* concerns what words can combine with what others, e.g. what nouns are permissible with what verbs.

A *word field* is a collection of words which are related by a common core of meaning, such as furniture, plants, colours, the instruments of an orchestra or whatever.

4 Syntax

Syntax concerns the possible arrangements of words in a language. The basic unit is the *sentence* which minimally consists of a main clause (containing at least a subject and verb).

Linguists distinguish between *deep structure* — the level on which the unambiguous semantic structure of a sentence is represented — and *surface structure* — the actual form of a sentence.

Sentence structure is normally displayed by means of a *tree diagram* (the so-called ‘phrase structure’) and by a system of *re-write rules* one can move from an initial unit (the entire sentence) to the individual elements (a so-called ‘terminal string’).

The term *generation* is used in linguistics to *describe exhaustively* the structure of sentences. Whether it also refers to the manner in which speakers actually *produce* sentences, from the moment of conceiving an idea to saying a sentence, has not been finally clarified yet.

A *transformation* is a change in form between the deep and the surface surface and maintains the relatedness of *semantically similar* sentences such as active and passive ones.

Generative grammar can be divided into three main periods. An early one dating from Chomsky (1957), a central one which was initiated by Chomsky (1965) and a more recent one which reached its maturity in the 1980’s with the development of the *government and binding* model.

Universal grammar represents an attempt to specify what structural elements are present in *all* languages, i.e. what is the common core, and to derive means for describing these adequately.

Language would appear to be organised modularly. Thus syntax is basically independent of phonology for instance, though there is an *interface* between these two levels of language.

The purpose of analysing the internal structure of sentences is

- 1) to reveal the hierarchy in the ordering of elements
- 2) to explain how surface ambiguities come about
- 3) to demonstrate the relatedness of certain sentences

To begin with, however, students should be aware of how syntax is acquired by young children.

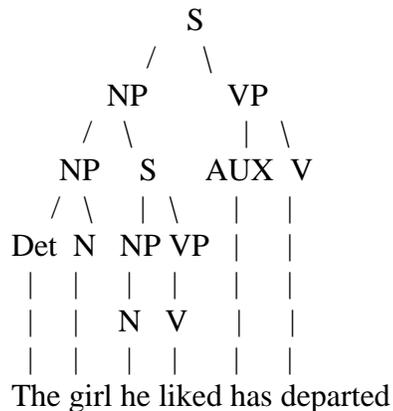
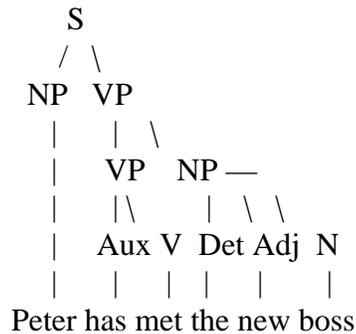
ACQUISITION OF SYNTAX

Input	Language heard in child’s surroundings
Step 1	Abstraction of structures from actual sentences
Step 2	Internalisation of these structures as syntactic templates (unconscious knowledge)

4.1 Phrase structure grammar

This is a basic type of grammar which attempts to show the structure which lies behind a sentence by breaking it down into its component parts. It can be represented in the form of tree diagrams.

Sentence	à	Noun Phrase + Verb Phrase
Verb Phrase	à	Verb + Noun Phrase
	à	Auxiliary and full Verb
Noun Phrase	à	Determiner + Noun
		(determiner = articles, possessive pronouns, demonstrative pronouns, numerals, etc.)



4.2 Deep and surface structure

To indicate the nature of the structure which sentences have but which is not evident from their spoken form one uses the term *deep structure* and *surface structure*. The term surface structure has an obvious meaning. This is the actual form which a sentence has when spoken. The deep

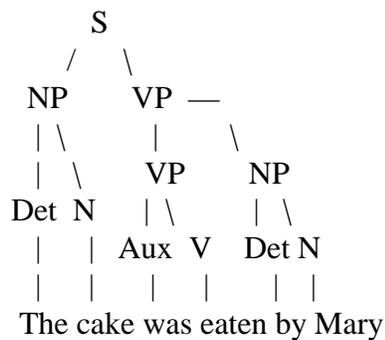
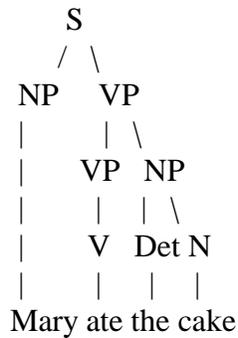
structure on the other hand is a model of the structure necessary to account for the meaning of a sentence. As mentioned above this might correspond to a map of a real but unobservable mental structure, however there is no direct proof of this.

4.3 Transformations

A transformation alters a basic sentence structure into a derived one in deep structure.

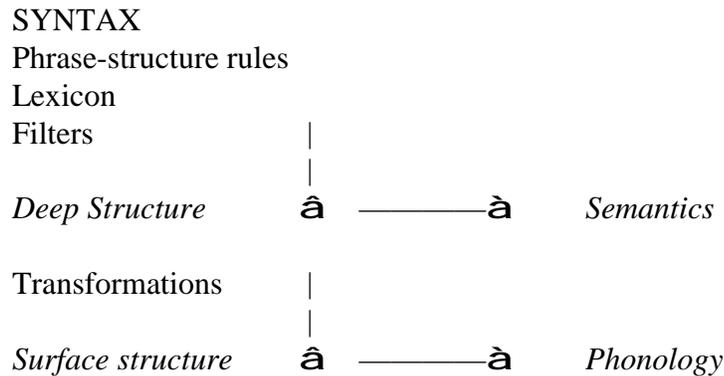
ACTIVE \rightarrow PASSIVE

NP1 V NP2 \rightarrow NP2 be V -en by NP1
Mary ate the cake. \rightarrow *The cake was eaten by Mary.*



4.4 The standard theory

Generative grammar has undergone several major revisions since its initial introduction by Noam Chomsky in 1957. The present term *standard theory* is used to refer to the model of generative grammar as expounded in the 1965 book by Chomsky *Aspects of the Theory of Syntax*.



UNIVERSAL GRAMMAR, ADEQUACY AND LANGUAGE ACQUISITION Any model of universal grammar (i.e. recent generative grammar), if it is to achieve the higher goal of explanatory adequacy, must have three attributes: 1) universally valid, 2) psychologically real 3) maximally constrained.

5 Semantics

Semantics is concerned with the study of meaning and is related to both philosophy and logic. *Semiotics* is the study of communication systems in general. *Sign language* is a common means of communication among those who are deaf and can, if learned from childhood, approach natural language in terms of scope and flexibility.

There are four recognisable types of meaning: *lexical* meaning, *grammatical* meaning, *sentence* meaning and *utterance* meaning which refer to the areas of derivational morphology, inflectional morphology, syntax and pragmatics respectively.

External meaning relationships involve *sense* (relationships between words) and *denotation* (relationship of word to what it signifies).

There are various internal meaning relationships such *synonymy* (sameness of meaning), *antonymy* (difference in meaning), *hyponymy* (hierarchical order of meaning).

Different models for semantic analysis are available: *prototype theory*, where a central concept is taken as typical and less central ones are peripheral, and *componential analysis* which seeks to break words down into their component semantic parts.

6 Pragmatics

Pragmatics is the study of language from the point of view of *usage*. It has various sub-forms depending on the emphasis given by linguists, for instance it can be investigated from a strictly linguistic stance or with regard to social factors.

Presupposition means that something is taken for granted in a sentence whereas *entailment* implies that some other fact(s) apart from that stated in the sentence also hold(s).

In the analysis of *conversation* various *implicatures* — ‘rules’ if you like — are taken to apply. They refer to the quality, quantity, relevance and manner of conversation and are assumed to be almost universally valid.

A *speech act* is a classifiable and structured utterance spoken in an actual communication situation. There are preconditions for speech acts such as *felicity conditions* which must be met for a speech act to be successful.

Speech acts are classified according to their *effect*. *Locutionary* acts simply express sense or reference. *Illocutionary* acts express the intentions of the speaker whereas for *perlocutionary* acts the effect is of greatest importance. There are further subdivisions in type such as *directives* (commands for example) or *commissives* (promises for instance). An *indirect* speech act is one where the intended meaning of a sentence is different from the literal one.

Deixis concerns the various types of *pointing* which is possible with language. This can be direct, with adverbs of direction, or indirect, for instance with different types of pronoun.

Discourse analysis is concerned with the analysis of spoken language in sections larger than the sentence. The two main features for successful discourse are *coherence* (based on semantic transparency) and *cohesion* (achieved through formal mechanisms such as sentence connectors and anaphoric elements).

Emphasising sentence elements is achieved mainly through *topicalisation* (movement of highlighted elements, normally to the beginning of a sentence) and *clefting* (moving an element to the beginning by placing it in a dummy sentence with the rest in a subordinate clause).

The *ethnography of communication* concerns itself with discourse strategies in cultures which differ considerably from each other.

TYPES OF SPEECH ACTS

Speech acts can be classified and subclassified. The first division leads to a triad of basic types one of which applies to all possible utterances.

- 1) **LOCUTIONARY ACTS** These express sense or reference as in *A cow is an animal* or *The earth is round*.
- 2) **ILLOCUTIONARY ACTS** Here the intentions of the speaker are expressed by using a performative verb such as *I baptise this ship The Queen Mary*.
- 3) **PERLOCUTIONARY ACTS** With this type the effect of the linguistic action is central. Perlocutionary acts include those which have a visible effect on the speaker, such as insulting or persuading someone.

The second and third type above are concerned with intention and effect and are thus the more prototypical type of speech acts.

III Areas and applications

1 Sociolinguistics

Sociolinguistics is a relatively recent discipline which investigates the use of language in society, particularly in order to determine what the possible reasons for *language variation* are and hence to understand more about the process of *language change*. This change has been shown to proceed in a manner which looks like an S-curve (slow start, quick middle section with a tapering off at the top).

Various methods have been developed in sociolinguistics for ensuring that one's data is *random* and *objective*. The main consideration here is whether speakers are aware that they are being observed by the linguist and, if so, whether they behave naturally or not.

The varieties of language examined by sociolinguists are usually *urban* and in particular take account of the factors *class*, *age* and *sex*. The central element in a sociolinguist study is the *linguistic variable* — some item of language (phonological, morphological, syntactic or semantic) — which is suspected of varying systematically in correlation with the factors such mentioned.

There are various kinds of speech community depending on linguistic configuration. Diglossia involves a division of languages according to function, whereas a bilingual community has two languages without such a functional distribution.

The social development of a language can lead to *split*. This in turn many involve the question of language *maintenance* and *preservation*. If a language is discontinued by its entire community one speaks of language *death*.

An important aspect of the social use of language involves the means of addressing others. German, like other European languages apart from English, has a pronominal distinction between acquaintances and strangers which is connected with the notions of power and solidarity expressed in language.

2 Variety studies

A *variety* is a neutral term for any recognisable form of language. It can be diachronically, diastratically or diatopically defined. A *dialect* is a regional form of a language. It frequently is part of a continuum of dialects. The term *sociolect*, or sometimes social dialect, is used for a recognisable form of urban language and again may represent a point on a continuum determined by social class.

An *isogloss* is a separating line between two areas which differ in some linguistic feature. Isoglosses tend to cluster and so frequently form a dialect boundary.

The history of *dialectology* goes back to the last century and can be seen as an offshoot of Indo-European comparative philology and was understandably purely historical in its orientation. It used such techniques as the questionnaire and was interested in compiling linguistic maps, particularly those conserving older rural usage.

Stigma refers to the extent to which linguistic forms are disapproved of by a community. *Prestige* is the reverse: it concerns those forms which are approved of. However, prestige is a complex matter. Working class speech may have *covert* prestige for its speakers and nonetheless this may be denied openly by them.

3 Corpus linguistics

A *corpus* is a collection of related language data which is compiled and analysed linguistically. Such data can be synchronic or diachronic. In the latter case it consists of *texts*, in the former it could also contain *sound files* or transcription of speech.

The advantage of a corpus is that it can offer sufficient attestations of a structure or word to allow linguists to make statistically reliable statements. Equally corpora can be used to disprove assumptions, e.g. about when a certain structure appeared, in what type of text, or with what author.

A corpus can also be used for style analysis and may in some cases help to determine authorship by looking at recurrent patterns in the syntax or vocabulary of an author.

One should also mention that in some instances corpora are not useful because they do not tell us what is or was not possible in a language.

4 Language and gender

The area of language and gender is concerned with a number of issues. For instance, how is it that western languages are inherently sexist, i.e. embody discrimination in their structure and/or vocabulary? This may be by assuming that the default case is always male as in *The linguist must gather data and be careful that he organises it properly*. Apart from this generic usage, language may be sexist in the terms it uses for women, in using animal terms derisively for women, e.g. *stupid cow*, *silly duck*. This kind of situation is a reflection of the position of women in western societies and relates to the history of the cultures they embody.

There are two main views on language differences between the sexes. One stresses the *difference* between the two while the other stresses the fact that male *dominance* is the operative force.

There have been many attempts to *desexify* language by creating new generic forms such as *chairperson* or simply *chair* instead of *chairman* / *chairwoman*. The goal of such creations is to arrive at a neutral label which can be used for either sex without highlighting this.

In the area of written address English has had considerable problems, e.g. the forms *Mrs.* and *Miss* (which stress the marital status of the woman, but not of the man) are now regarded as antiquated and unacceptable. The use of *Ms.* shows some of the difficulties of the attempts to desexify language: the success depends on whether the new form is accepted in the society in question; a new form can also backfire which is obviously not intended by its inventors.

5 Language acquisition

Language acquisition is the process whereby children learn their native language. It consists of *abstracting* structural information from the language they hear around them and *internalising* this information for later use. This conception of language acquisition can explain why one can produce a theoretically unlimited set of sentences in one's native language. This stance is known as the *nativist* view and contrasts with an earlier *empiricist* view.

Linguists nowadays assume that a large body of general knowledge concerning the structure of language in general is *genetically encoded* (in what is sometimes called the Language Acquisition Device) so that when exposed to a particular language children can grasp very quickly what values this language has for certain features — so-called *parameter setting*.

There are fairly definite *stages* which a child goes through during early language acquisition. These form a *progression* from the babbling stage to that of the multi-word sentence. The first comprehensible word is usually uttered between nine months and one year. By the age of 6 or 7 a child has acquired all the structural features of his/her native language.

In the early stages children exhibit a phenomenon known as *overextension* in which they use words with too great a scope. This illustrates a principle of early language acquisition: children move from the general to the particular, refining their knowledge of their language as they proceed. Furthermore one can claim that those elements and features which appear earliest are *natural* and *unmarked* in a statistical sense across the world's languages. This applies for instance to syntax where major lexical categories appear first or to phonetics where vowels and sonorants appear before obstruents.

A strict distinction exists between *first* and *second* language acquisition inasmuch as the latter is acquired after puberty (the watershed for acquiring a language with native-like competence). Second language acquisition is usually *guided* (also called *controlled*) as opposed to that of the first language which is *natural*.

The knowledge which children build up is very largely *unconscious*. For instance it is not possible for a child to verbalise his/her knowledge about syntactic structures although he/she is perfectly well able to apply this when producing sentences.

Language acquisition is *paralleled* by other linguistic situations, notably by that of *creolisation* where speakers with little or no linguistic input manage to create a new language in a very short period. Furthermore, it may be that features of early language acquisition — such as *metanalysis* in the history of English — are carried over into adulthood and become *permanent* in a given language.

There are different models of second language acquisition which reflect the manner in which learners gain knowledge of the new language, either in a similar manner to their native language — the *identity hypothesis* — or against the background of this — the *interference hypothesis*. There are also models which emphasise how a second language is produced (*monitor model*) or which stress the role of external factors (*discourse* and *acculturation models*).

6 Language and the brain

Neurolinguistics is the study of all aspects of language directly related to the functioning of the brain. It is difficult to determine where the language faculty is located but at least two main areas have been identified in the brain: 1) *Broca's area* responsible for production and 2) *Wernicke's area* which is involved in understanding language.

Aphasia refers to any physically based malfunctioning of language. The two main sources of this are lesions caused by accidents and brain disease resulting from cancerous tumors. There are various kinds of impairment which may involve production or comprehension or both. An individual with aphasia may have difficulty finding words, or producing sounds or may show a lack of grammatical words.

The *tip of the tongue* phenomenon can be seen with non-pathological speakers and is characterised by a sudden block in lexical retrieval and which is released again for no apparent reason. *Slips of the tongue* involve the involuntary and unintended switching of elements among words of a sentence. Normally the onset or rhyme of adjacent syllables are switched and this phenomenon offers firm evidence for the validity of the syllable as a phonological unit.

7 Contrastive linguistics

Contrastive linguistics is a relatively recent sub-discipline in linguistics which is concerned with the comparison of two languages with the deliberate goal of indicating the pitfalls for language learners with an outset language X and a target language Y.

In its orientation, contrastive linguistics is *synchronic* and does not consider possible genetic

relationships between languages. There is a *theoretical* and an *applied* approach to the field which are concerned with outlining general principles and applying these in practical analyses respectively.

The main phenomenon which is considered in contrastive linguistics is *interference* which represents the use of structural features from the outset language in the target one. While this by no means explains all mistakes in the target language it does account for a large number of systematic mistakes — technically termed *errors*.

The simplest form of interference is substitution. Speakers also show over- and under-differentiation according to whether a feature, possible in the target language, is more or less frequent in the outset language and hence used more or less often by the second language speaker.

Interference is found on all levels of language. For instance, on the sound level it represents a *foreign accent*. On the lexical level it is found in the many cases of *false friends*. In syntax it can lead to a not inconsiderable amount of misunderstanding if the structures produced cannot be processed by native speakers of the target language. It can also be found on the level of pragmatics where differences in discourse strategies can lead to disconcerting effects in the target language.

8 Anthropological linguistics

Anthropology is a holistic science in that it can encompass every aspect of human society and culture in the present, and can trace human evolution and development stretching back into prehistory.

There are two main branches of anthropology: 1) *Cultural or social anthropology* which studies living human societies and their cultural systems; 2) *Physical or biological anthropology* which is primarily concerned with human evolution at a much greater time depth.

The first type of anthropology, *social anthropology*, has a linguistic dimension to it. It studies the use of language in different cultures and is concerned with how cultures reflect their specific features in the language or languages they speak. Linguistic anthropology can thus be seen as a superset to sociolinguistics in that it is concerned with large-scale differences.

IV Language change

Language change is present in all languages at all stages and is largely regular. Speakers are not always conscious of this. However, if it involves elements of an open class, like the lexicon, then speakers usually notice it and may try to prevent it by prescriptive behaviour.

Language change is not intentional but arises from the natural *variation* present in language at all times, e.g. that which occurs when speakers attempt to *move upwards* in society or when they *demonstrate solidarity* with the class to which they belong.

There may be an *internal motivation* for change. This is mainly the case when the change leads to paradigmatic regularity, so-called *analogical change* which results in more regular nominal or verbal forms.

Speakers tend to overestimate the *avoidance of homophony* as a source for change and not to grasp long-term structural changes which are often connected with *typological drift*, the movement from one type to another over several centuries, e.g. from synthetic to analytic in the history of English.

Change may lead to a *shift in status* for linguistic elements. For instance transparent words may become opaque. Full lexical words may *cliticise* (become temporarily attached to stems) and then appear as *inflections* (permanently attached). This process is known as *grammaticalisation*.

At any one stage of a language there will be *remnants of former changes* (such as umlaut in English). These remnants often appear as suppletive forms in paradigms.

In the past few decades sociolinguists have paid much attention to the *actuation* and *propagation* of language change. The trigger for change is difficult to make out in many cases but the propagation has been satisfactorily described in many recent studies which take social motivation to be central.

In historical linguistics there are two main methods for gaining knowledge of earlier stages of a language: the *comparative method* which involves looking at forms common to two or more genetically related languages and the technique of *internal reconstruction* which uses information about the structure of a single language at different periods to gain knowledge about a very early stage.

Language change is found on all levels of language, both in the past and in the present. Consult the above sections for examples from different spheres.

1 Linguistic schools and language change

Linguistics as a science began at the beginning of the 19th century and was diachronic in its orientation. The essential theoretical assumption of linguists at this time was that of the sound law which maintains that (phonological) change is without exception unless this is prevented by phonotactic environment. Later *analogical change* can mask an earlier change and make it appear irregular by increasing its scope beyond environments in which it originally applied.

In the latter half of the 19th century linguistic techniques reached a highwater mark and the linguists involved are known today as *Neogrammarians* (Junggrammatiker). One of their main concerns was the reconstruction of the *proto-language Indo-European* from which nearly all languages in Europe and many in the Middle East and northern India are derived.

The advent of *structuralism* at the beginning of the 20th century is associated with Ferdinand de Saussure, a French-Swiss scholar whose ideas have had a lasting effect on the linguistic thought of following generations. Saussure stressed the interaction at any one time of elements in a language's structure and maintained that these were interrelated in a network of relations. Diachrony is in his view just a stringing together of various synchronic slices, so that the structure of a language at one point in time is primary and historical considerations are dependent on the principles derived from viewing language synchronically.

The consideration of system structure has led to a *functional view of language change* which recognises both simplification and repair along with avoidance of merger as valid types of change.

The *generative approach* to language change sees it primarily as *rule change* which becomes part of the internalised grammar of a certain generation and remains so until replaced by another rule change. This type of change is always *binary*, i.e. a rule is either present or not, and as such has been rejected by many, notably by sociolinguists, who argue that there is often a variable application of rules and that speakers can have a command of several subsystems whose use is determined by external, social factors.

2 Language contact and language change

Virtually every language has been in *contact* with one or more other languages in its history. This contact has also had some kind of an *effect* on the form of the language involved. Here one must distinguish between *direct contact*, when speakers of two or more languages intermingle, and *indirect contact*, when the second language is known only through the printed word or (nowadays) the non-print media. The latter type involves a language with sizeable prestige and results in *cultural borrowings*.

A third type of situation can be termed *delayed effect* contact because the effect is only apparent some considerable time later. Such an effect is usually low-level — such as that on the level of phonetics — but may cause major changes over long periods if the morphology is affected.

Stable contact situations may arise with *bilingualism* as the result. If the languages in contact are functionally distinguished then one calls the situation *diglossia*.

Contact between dialects is also of importance as seen clearly in the history of English. Here many forms survive in the standard which have their origin outside of the east midland area around London which was the geographical source for early standard English.

Languages which are contained in a geographically well delimited region can often form what is termed a *linguistic area* (a translation of German *Sprachbund*). These languages frequently come to share structural properties which diffuse throughout the area — irrespective of genetic affiliation. The standard example of such an area is the Balkans.

3 Language typology

Language typology involves the classification of languages according to their grammatical structure and not on the basis of genetic affiliation.

There are four basic types: *analytic* (little or no morphology), *synthetic* (many polyfunctional inflections), *agglutinative* (monofunctional transparent inflections), *polysynthetic/incorporating* (extreme compression of lexical and morphological forms).

There would seem to be a *typological cycle* such that languages develop from analytic to synthetic, back to analytic and so on. The shift to a synthetic type occurs largely when word forms coalesce and grammaticalisation occurs. A language can become analytic when it loses inflections through phonetic attrition as has happened in the history of English. This cycle need not be so neat and simple: there are frequently conflicting forces operating in a language so that incorporation and analysis may arise concurrently.

Typology also concerns the question of *universals*. These refer to features which are present in all or nearly all languages. Furthermore some universals imply the existence of others and are hence called *implicational universals*, a term coined by Joseph Greenberg, a leading figure in contemporary typological study.

Language type involves a number of factors. Morphological structure is one but *syntactic organisation* (so-called ‘clause alignment’) is another. This covers a number of features and linguists have noted that features with similar values tend to cluster together. A language which shows similar values for the various syntactic features is termed *harmonic* and this would seem to be a goal towards which a language may drift, other factors permitting.

V Linguistic theory

Linguistic theory in the modern sense has received its impetus from the seminal work done within the framework of generative grammar since the mid 1950's. A good theory should exhibit at least four basic properties 1) *economy*, 2) *simplicity*, 3) *generality*, 4) *falsifiability*. Furthermore a theory must be adequate on three levels: that of *observation*, of *description* and of *explanation*.

Different levels of language have been subject to theories in the second half of the 20th century. In particular, *phonology* and *syntax*, because of their abstract and formal properties, have attracted linguists of a theoretical persuasion. There is no generally accepted theory of *semantics* because the data is somewhat too diffuse and fuzzy-edged. And as regards *morphology* one can note that it is usually treated as subordinate to syntax (at least in generative theories).

VI Review of linguistics

It is essential for students to be aware of what is required of them when they are taking their final examinations. The following is a catalogue of knowledge which can be reasonably expected after students have completed their course of studies. It is presented in the form of questions on the various areas and subareas of linguistics. If a student feels that he/she would not be in a position to answer these questions satisfactorily — especially if the area is one which he/she has chosen for his/her final examination (oral or written) — then remedial study to attain the necessary knowledge is recommended.

1 Basic distinctions and definitions

The idea behind this section is to check up on your knowledge of linguistics. It is arranged as a series of questions, much along the lines of those you could expect in an oral examination. If you feel you can answer the questions correctly, then you have understood the present summary of linguistics. In some cases you may find it necessary to consult the more comprehensive texts contained in the *Linguistics Surveyor*.

Answer competently the two basic questions *What is language?* and *What is linguistics?* and distinguish between languages and language. Enumerate the chief *levels* and *areas* of linguistics. Furthermore, state what is meant by theoretical and general linguistics on the one hand and applied and descriptive linguistics on the other.

Design features of language Compare human language with other communication systems; specify what is meant by semiotics. Furthermore state what are the general structural features of human languages.

The history of linguistics Sketch the development of Indo-European studies (from early 19th to early 20th century). Give an overview of the Indo-European languages and outline the distribution of the Germanic languages.

State what the development of structuralism from the beginning of 20th century has been and distinguish between European and American structuralism.

Here are the basic tenets of structuralism. State what is understood by them and give examples to illustrate what they mean.

Synchrony and diachrony

Langue and parole

Signifiant and signifié (arbitrariness of relationship)

Paradigm and syntagm

What is generative grammar? State what the term *generative* refers to and outline the main developments in this linguistic theory since its beginnings. Explain in this context what is meant by the following key concepts.

Competence and performance

Deep and surface structure

Conscious and unconscious knowledge

Universal grammar; language acquisition device

2 Linguistic levels

State in a single sentence what is the concern of the following levels.

PHONETICS

PHONOLOGY

MORPHOLOGY

SYNTAX

SEMANTICS

PRAGMATICS

There follow concepts and constructs from the levels just listed. You should be in a position to state concisely what is meant by these.

Phonetics Define the area and the following branches of phonetics. *Articulatory, acoustic, auditive phonetics*. What are articulatory organs, where are they and what is their role in speech production? The following are three-term labels used for describing speech sounds.

- 1) *Place of articulation*
labial, labio-dental, dental, alveolar, palatal, velar, glottal

- 2) *Manner of articulation*
stops, fricatives, affricates, glides, vowels
- 3) *Voice*
voiced or voiceless

What is the system of cardinal vowels? Who invented it and what value does it have for speech description.

Phonology Define the area and what is meant by the following terms: *phone*, *allophone*, *phoneme*. State what is meant by a *minimal pair* and give examples from English and German.

Explain what the linguist understands by a *syllable*. What advantage does a phonological analysis based on this unit have? What does the term *phonotactics* refer to?

Outline briefly the development of phonological theory. Say who Trubetzkoy, Jakobson, Chomsky and Halle were/are and what is meant by distinctive feature phonology.

Prosody Define and subdivide. What is meant by *accent* and *intonation*? Explain briefly how the stress system of English works.

Morphology Define the area and the terms *morpheme* and *allomorph*. Distinguish between *inflectional* and *derivational* morphology giving examples to illustrate what you mean.

What does the linguist understand by an open and a closed class. What is a word class and what categories do conjugation and declination refer to?

Distinguish between tense and aspect, illustrating what you mean by examples from English.

What is language typology? In this connection distinguish between synthetic (inflecting), analytic and agglutinative languages and offer a general characterisation of English within this framework.

Lexicology What is meant by word formation? Explain what the following types refer to: composition, affixation, conversion (zero derivation), back formation, contractions, clipping. Explain what is meant by productivity and give examples from English to illustrate your answer.

Syntax Define the area and state what its main unit of analysis is. How does the latter subdivide? What are major and minor syntactical categories? Mention in this connection what is meant by a phrase structure grammar.

What is the main theory of syntax at the present? What are the main periods recognised within this theory? Explain the terms *generative* and *transformation*. Who can they be traced back to?

Semantics Define the area and the following key terms: sense and denotation; lexeme. What is meant by *homonymy* and *polysemy*? Explain the following meaning relationships: *synonymy*, *antonomy* (graded and non-graded) and hyponymy. Distinguish between the following kinds of meaning: *lexical*, *grammatical sentence* and *utterance meaning*.

What is understood by a *word field*? How is the concept useful? What is meant by *prototype theory* in semantics?

Pragmatics Define the area and say what is meant by a speech act. State what different types are commonly recognised. Trace the concern of linguists within this field and say who Austin and Searle was/is.

What is understood by *locutionary*, *perlocutionary* and *illocutionary force*. What are *conversational implicatures* and who first described them?

3 Areas of linguistics

The number of areas of linguistics recognised by linguists vary. The divisions made are frequently arbitrary and there is much overlap. In the following only the main areas are mentioned. For students these may have been the subject of seminars in which they gained specialist knowledge. What should at all costs be avoided is that students are restricted in their acquaintance to just those areas where they received special instruction.

Psycholinguistics, language acquisition Characterise the main features of first language acquisition and state its relevance to general linguistic theory. Enumerate the stages in early acquisition.

Distinguish between first and second language acquisition and mention the chief models for describing the process of later language acquisition.

Language change Explain how the linguist sees language change and compare this to lay views on the matter. What does language change tell us about the general structure of language? To what extent do linguists today understand the mechanisms of language change? Refer to the findings of sociolinguistics in your answer.

What possible effects can language contact have on the languages involved. In your account refer specifically to periods of contact in the history of English. Distinguish between lexical and grammatical borrowings.

Sociolinguistics Outline the development of sociolinguistics since the sixties and mention the main figures in America and England. To what extent are the insights of sociolinguistics an advance on those of traditional dialectology?

What is the contribution of sociolinguistics to general theories of language change and how does this contrast with other approaches to the subject?

Describe the techniques applied in sociolinguistics and discuss the advantages of the methodology used.

Varieties of English Sketch the main distribution of English in the present-day world. State how these areas arose and to what extent the historical and present-day situations led to specific linguistic configurations. In this connection pay particular attention to the historical development of English outside of Europe in the colonial period.

State what is understood by a pidgin and a creole and discuss these from a general perspective. Why are they relevant to modern linguistics?

Deal with the sociolinguistic aspects of language contact and discuss such phenomena as diglossia and bilingualism.

Contrastive linguistics Define the area, mention how and when it arose and state what its specific contribution has been to the area of applied linguistics. Discuss the following terms: *interlanguage, interference, false friends, over- and under-differentiation.*

VII A brief chronology of English

1 External history

The history of any language can be divided into *external* and *internal* history. The former aspect concerns the political and social developments in the community speaking the language while the latter involves the changes which take place over time within the language itself. Needless to say these two aspects are connected to each other but it is a one-way street: the external history can affect the internal one but not vice versa. For instance the rise of bilingualism between the Scandinavians and the English in the north of the country in the 9th and 10th century had repercussions for the structure of English. However, one cannot say that an internal change such as the Great Vowel Shift in any way influenced external developments in England.

1.1 The Germanic languages

Before beginning with the Germanic settlement of Britain it is essential for the student to grasp the relationships of the Germanic languages within each other and to the other branches of Indo-European with which they form a genetic group (see section on language families below). The diagram below shows the main lines connecting the various languages of the Germanic branch of Indo-European and gives an indication of their history and present-day distribution.

Indo-European

Main Subgroups

Hellenic	Baltic	Slavic
Italic	Celtic	Germanic
Albanian	Armenian	Hittite
Indo-Iranian	Tocharian	

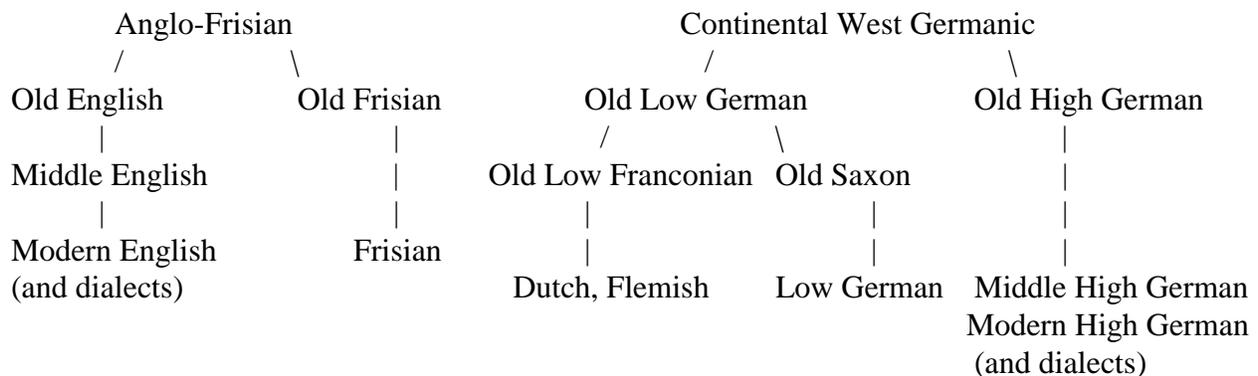
Germanic

<i>North</i>	Icelandic, Swedish, Norwegian(Bokmål & Nynorsk), Danish, Faroese
<i>West</i>	English, German, Low German, Frisian, Dutch, Flemish, Afrikaans, Yiddish
<i>East</i>	Gothic

Main divisions of Germanic

OLDEST STAGE	PRESENT-DAY LANGUAGES
<i>North Germanic</i>	
Runes (3/4c)	Icelandic, Faroese, Swedish,
Old Norse (13c)	Norwegian (Bokmål & Nynorsk) and Danish
<i>East Germanic</i>	
Gothic (4c)	(none)
<i>West Germanic</i>	
Old High German (8c)	High German (Yiddish)
Old English (7c)	English
Old Saxon (8c)	Low German
Old Frisian (14c)	Frisian (North and West)
Old Low Franconian (12c)	Dutch, Flemish, Afrikaans

The West Germanic group



1.2 The settlement of Britain

The withdrawal of the Romans about 440 from England left a political vacuum. The Celts of the south were attacked by tribes from the north and in their desperation sought help from abroad. There are parallels for this at other points in the history of the British Isles. Thus in the case of Ireland, help was sought by Irish chieftains from their Anglo-Norman neighbours in Wales in the late 12th century in their internal squabbles. This heralded the invasion of Ireland by the English. Equally with the Celts of the 5th century the help which they imagined would solve their internal difficulties turned out to be a boomerang which turned on them.

Our source for these early days of English history is the *Ecclesiastical History of the English People* written by a monk called the Venerable Bede around 730 in the monastery of

Jarrow in Co. Durham (i.e. on the north east coast of England). According to this work — written in Latin — the Celts first appealed to the Romans but the help forthcoming was slight and so they turned to the Germanic tribes of the North Sea coast. The date which Bede gives for the first arrivals is 449. This can be assumed to be fairly correct. The invaders consisted of members of various Germanic tribes, chiefly Angles from the historical area of Angeln in north east Schleswig Holstein. It was this tribe which gave England its name, i.e. Englalund, the land of the Angles (*Engle*, a mutated form from earlier **Angli*, note that the superscript asterisk denotes a reconstructed form, i.e. one that is not attested). Other tribes represented in these early invasions were Jutes from the Jutland peninsula (present-day mainland Denmark), Saxons from the area nowadays known as Niedersachsen ('Lower Saxony', but which is historically the original Saxony), the Frisians from the North Sea coast islands stretching from the present-day north west coast of Schleswig-Holstein down to north Holland. These are nowadays split up into North, East and West Frisian islands, of which only the North and the West group still have a variety of language which is definitely Frisian (as opposed to Low German or Dutch).

The Germanic areas which became established in the period following the initial settlements consisted of the following seven 'kingdoms': Kent, Essex, Sussex, Wessex, East Anglia, Mercia and Northumbria. These are known as the Anglo-Saxon Heptarchy. Political power was initially concentrated in the sixth century in Kent but this passed to Northumbria in the seventh and eighth centuries. After this a shift to the south began, first to Mercia in the ninth century and later on to West Saxony in the tenth and eleventh centuries.

The English were formally Christianised in 597 when Augustine, who was sent by Pope Gregory I with a group of missionaries, arrived in England. He was made Archbishop of Canterbury in 601, establishing this city as the centre of British bishops, a tradition which has remained since. By the end of the sixth century, most of Germanic speaking England had become Christian.

The Germanic tribes in England show a characteristic distribution almost from the very beginning. The Jutes, according to legend led by the brothers Hengest and Horsa (both words mean horse), settled in Kent (the name is Celtic) probably having made their way via the coast of present-day Belgium. The Saxons settled in the remaining area south of the Thames and on the Isle of Wight. They were to remain there and found a kingdom which obtained practical sovereignty over England in the late Old English period and which was known then as West Saxony from which the name Wessex is derived (the same holds for Sussex and Essex). North of the Thames the Angles settled. This large area can be further subdivided. North of the Humber was a region which represented an amalgamation of two former Celtic kingdoms, Bernicia and Deira. Between Humber and Thames lay the area of Mercia.

The dialects of Old English are more or less co-terminous with the regional kingdoms. The various Germanic tribes brought their own dialects which were then continued in England. Thus we have a Northumbrian dialect (Anglian in origin), a Kentish dialect (Jutish in origin), etc. The question as to what degree of cohesion already existed between the Germanic dialects when they were still spoken on the continent is unclear. Scholars of the 19th century favoured a theory whereby English and Frisian formed an approximate linguistic unity. This postulated linguistic entity is variously called Anglo-Frisian and Ingvaemonic, after the name which Tacitus (c.55-120) in his *Germania* gave to the Germanic population settled on the North Sea coast. Towards the end of the Old English period the dialectal position becomes complicated by the fact that the West Saxon dialect achieved prominence as an inter-dialectal means of communication.

1.3 Chronological summary

5th — 1st centuries BC England becomes Celtic through the emigration of tribes from Gaul and the Low Countries (Belgae).

55-54 BC Julius Caesar invades Britain; thorough conquest starts about a hundred years later.

440 Romans leave England due to shrinking empire

449 First Germanic tribes arrive in England

Late 5th century onwards England divides roughly into seven kingdoms which reflect the tribes occupying the relevant areas. Of these groupings that of the West Saxons in the central south was destined to become the strongest.

End of 6th century The first records of English are extant from this period. Later in the 9th and 10th centuries the language of West Saxony became the accepted dialect form for written works (historical and religious). A dialect used in this function is called a koiné. The bulk of works in this dialect are those of Ælfric and the commissioned translations of King Alfred. Note that parallel to these and other works we have a large number of works in Latin such as Bede's ecclesiastical history.

End of 8th century Invasion of north England by Vikings. This is the beginning of a series of invasions (the most important in 865) which brings the Vikings to England on a more or less permanent basis. Their language affects English and is responsible for a large number of loan-words entering the language. It is not until 1042 that the Vikings' power is entirely vanquished.

1066 The invasion of England by the Normans is an event which had vast consequences for England, not only linguistically. The influence of the Anglo-Norman language was greatest immediately after the invasion among the clergy and in the English court which was now seated not in Winchester as in Old English times but in London where it was to remain. Writing in English in the early Middle English period is marked by extreme dialectal diversity as the old West Saxon standard was infinitely too archaic and the later standard of the London area had not yet become established. After 1204 the political influence of the Normans ceased to exist and after this it was Central French which provided the source for newer French loan-words. The stylistic two-tier structure of the English lexicon has its roots in this period.

1400 By the time of Chaucer the English of London had become the implicit standard for the whole country with the exception of Scotland where early forms of Scots had been established in writing and which were to exercise a strong influence in Scotland up to the present century. Note that London English combines elements from three main dialect sources: East Midland, Kentish and to a limited degree from the North.

1476 William Caxton introduces printing to England and greatly contributes, not least through his own literary efforts, to the codification of English orthography.

15th century onwards In the fifteenth century in the light of the humanist tradition and the renewed interest in Latin and Greek the study of classical rhetoric and grammarians lead to a series of works on English which lasted until well into the 18th century. The authors of these works are called orthoepists. All of them are of a prescriptive nature; nonetheless they contributed to various aspects of the standardisation of English, for example in the sphere of

lexis (vocabulary). At the end of the 16th and the beginning of the 17th century the dispute known as the *Inkhorn Controversy* raged: here the adherents of classical borrowing to an inordinate degree engaged in learned squabbles with those who wished to avoid an alienation of English vocabulary by wholesale borrowing from the classical languages Latin and Greek.

17th and 18th century Another factor in the development of the standard in English is the lexicographical work done on English. This starts at the beginning of the 17th century (1604) and culminates in the famous English dictionary by Samuel Johnson (1755) which uses English authors as authorities on usage and which itself had an unprecedented influence on subsequent generations of writers in English and was thus a factor in the standardisation of English vocabulary.

19th century to the present More than in any other European country England is marked by an emphasis on standard pronunciation. The type of pronunciation known today as Received Pronunciation (after Daniel Jones) or under other less precise epithets such as The Queen's English, Oxford English, BBC English, etc. is a sociolect of English, that is, it is the variety of English spoken by the educated middle classes, irrespective of what part of England they may live in. In the nineteenth century and into this century as well, this accent of English was that fostered by the so-called public schools (private, fee-paying schools) which were the domain of the middle class. It is also the variety which foreigners are exposed to when they learn 'British English'.

2 Internal history

2.1 Periods in the development of English

It is common to divide the history of English into three periods and old, a middle and an early modern one. The justification for this is partly external and partly internal. The Old English period begins in the middle of the 5th century with the coming of Germanic tribes to settle in England. The Middle English period begins with the conquest of England by Normans after their success in the Battle of Hastings in 1066, the end of this period is marked by the introduction of printing by William Caxton in 1476. The early modern period begins with the 16th century and is characterised by an expansion in vocabulary by borrowing from classical languages, by the gradual conclusion of the Great Vowel Shift (see below) and by the regularisation of English grammar after the demise of the language's former inflectional morphology.

2.2 Old English

English has been spoken in England since around 450. To be more precise a set of varieties of West Germanic have been spoken. After the Anglo-Saxon invasion no-one had an awareness of England as such let alone of English. With the establishment of the West Saxon kingdom in later centuries and with the court which formed the pivot point of this kingdom a first inkling of the idea of English developed. With the invasion of England by the Danes (after 800) it became more clear that the Germanic tribes in England were separate from their fellows on the Continent and in Scandinavia. Among the different groupings in England in the Old English period

different dialects (that is purely geographical variants) are recognizable: Northumbrian in the north, Anglian in the middle and West-Saxon in the south. Due to the political significance of West-Saxon in the late Old English period (after the 9th century) the written form of this dialect developed into something like a standard. Note that at this time it was Winchester and not London which was the political centre of the country. The term used for the West Saxon 'standard' is *koiné* which derives from Greek and means a common dialect, that is a variety which was used in monasteries in parts of England outside of West Saxony for the purpose of writing.

THE DIALECTS OF OLD ENGLISH It is common to divide England into four dialect areas for the Old English period. First of all note that by England that part of mainland Britain is meant which does not include Scotland, Wales and Cornwall. These three areas were Celtic from the time of the arrival of the Celts some number of centuries BC and remained so well into the Middle English period.

The dialect areas of England can be traced back quite clearly to the Germanic tribes which came and settled in Britain from the middle of the 5th century onwards. There were basically three tribal groups among the earlier settlers in England: the Angles, the Saxons and the Jutes. The Angles came from the area of Angeln (roughly the Schleswig-Holstein of today), the Saxons from the area of east and central Lower Saxony and the Jutes from the Jutland peninsula which forms west Denmark today.

Of these three groups the most important are the Saxons as they established themselves as the politically dominant force in the Old English period. A number of factors contributed to this not least the strong position of the West Saxon kings, chief among these being Alfred (late 9th century). The West Saxon dialect was also strongest in the scriptorias (i.e. those places where manuscripts were copied and/or written originally) so that for written communication West Saxon was the natural choice.

A variety of documents have nonetheless been handed down in the language of the remaining areas. Notably from Northumbria a number of documents are extant which offer us a fairly clear picture of this dialect area. At this point one should also note that the central and northern part of England is linguistically fairly homogeneous in the Old English period and is termed Anglia. To differentiate sections within this area one speaks of Mercia which is the central region and Northumbria which is the northern part (i.e. north of the river Humber).

A few documents are available to us in the dialect of Kent (notably a set of sermons). This offers us a brief glimpse at the characteristics of this dialect which in the Middle English period was of considerable significance. Notable in Kentish is the fact that Old English /y:/ was pronounced /e:/ thus giving us words like *evil* in Modern English where one would expect something like *ivil*.

2.3 Middle English

After the invasion of England by the Normans in 1066, the West Saxon 'standard', which was waning anyway due to natural language change, was dealt a death blow. Norman French became the language of the English court and clergy. English sank to the level of a *patois* (an unwritten dialect). With the loss of England for the French in 1204 English gradually emerged as a literary language again. For the development of the later standard it is important to note (1) that it was

London which was now the centre of the country and (2) that printing was introduced into England in the late 15th century (1476 by Caxton). This latter fact contributed more than any single factor to the standardisation of English. It is obvious that for the production of printing fonts a standard form of the language must be agreed upon.

This applied above all to spelling, an area of English which was quite chaotic in the pre-printing days of the Middle English period.

THE DIALECTS OF MIDDLE ENGLISH The dialectal position of Middle English is basically a continuation of that of Old English. The most important extralinguistic fact for the development of the Middle English dialects is that the capital of the country was moved from Winchester (in the Old English period) to London by William the Conqueror in his attempt to diminish the political influence of the native English.

NORTHERN This dialect is the continuation of the Northumbrian variant of Old English. Note that by Middle English times English had spread to (Lowland) Scotland and indeed led to a certain literary tradition developing there at the end of the Middle English period which has been continued up to the present time (with certain breaks, admittedly).

Characteristics. Velar stops are retained (i.e. not palatalised) as can be seen in word pairs like *rigg/ridge*; *kirk/church*.

KENTISH This is the most direct continuation of an Old English dialect and has more or less the same geographical distribution.

Characteristics. The two most notable features of Kentish are (1) the existence of /e:/ for Middle English /i:/ and (2) so-called “initial softening” which caused fricatives in word-initial position to be pronounced voiced as in *vat*, *vane* and *vixen* (female fox).

SOUTHERN West Saxon is the forerunner of this dialect of Middle English. Note that the area covered in the Middle English period is greater than in the Old English period as inroads were made into Celtic-speaking Cornwall. This area becomes linguistically uninteresting in the Middle English period. It shares some features of both Kentish and West Midland dialects.

WEST MIDLAND This is the most conservative of the dialect areas in the Middle English period and is fairly well-documented in literary works. It is the western half of the Old English dialect area Mercia.

Characteristics. The retention of the Old English rounded vowels /y:/ and /ø:/ which in the East had been unrounded to /i:/ and /e:/ respectively.

EAST MIDLAND This is the dialect out of which the later standard developed. To be precise the standard arose out of the London dialect of the late Middle English period. Note that the London dialect naturally developed into what is called Cockney today while the standard became less and less characteristic of a certain area and finally (after the 19th century) became the sociolect which is termed Received Pronunciation.

Characteristics. In general those of the late embryonic Middle English standard.

THE GREAT VOWEL SHIFT The major change to affect the sound system of Middle English is that which resulted in a re-alignment of the system of long vowels and diphthongs which is traditionally known as the Great Vowel Shift. Essentially long vowels are raised one level and the two high vowels are diphthongised. The shift took several centuries to complete and is still continuing in Cockney (popular London speech). The shift of short /u/ to /ʌ/ as in *but* /bʊt/ to /bʌt/, which began in the mid 17th century, is not part of the vowel shift.

Great Vowel Shift

(1300)	1400	1500	1600	1700	1800	present-day
<i>driven</i>	/i:/	/ii/	/ei/	/ɛi/	/ʌi/	/ai/
<i>house</i>	/u:/	/uu/	/ou/	/ɔu/	/ʌu/	/au/
<i>feet</i>	/e:/		/i:/			
<i>fool</i>	/o:/		/u:/			
<i>beat</i>	/ɛ:/				/e:/	/i:/
<i>foal</i>	/ɔ:/				/o:/	/əu/
<i>take</i>	/a:/		/æ:/	/ɛ:/	/e:/	/ei/
<i>sail</i>	/ai/		/æi/	/ɛi/	/e:/	/ei/
<i>law</i>	/au/		/ɔu/	/ɒ:/		/ɔ:/

2.4 Early Modern English

The present-day orthography of English is essentially that of the late Middle English period. Nonetheless after the Middle English period several changes occur which account for the particular form of English spelling today. The Early Modern English period is however of interest to the linguist not only from the point of view of orthography: during this time the vocabulary of English took on the profile which it exhibits today: French loans were consolidated and a whole series of new classical loan-words (from Latin and Greek) were adopted into the language. The Early Modern period is also interesting as it is from this time that the colonisation of America by the English dates. This meant that the varieties of English of the period were exported to America where several of their characteristics have been retained due to the naturally conservative nature of peripheral dialects of a language. Other dialects of English including the varieties spoken in the developing world are based on the language of the Early Modern period.

Not least because Shakespeare lived at a pivotal period for the development of Modern English (late 16th and beginning of the 17th century) the term *Shakespearean English* is used quite often. Care is necessary here to determine what is meant as the reference can mean either the English of the period when Shakespeare lived or can have the narrow meaning of the language of his plays and poetry.

THE DIALECTS OF ENGLISH The dialects of present-day English can be seen as the continuation of the dialect areas which established themselves in the Old English period. The

dialectal division of the narrower region of England into 1) a northern, 2) a central and 3) a (subdivided) southern region has been retained to the present-day. The linguistic study of the dialects of English goes back to the 19th century when, as an offspin of Indo-European studies, research into (rural) dialects of the major European languages was considerably developed. The first prominent figure in English dialectology is Alexander Ellis (mid-19th century), followed somewhat later by Joseph Wright (late 19th and early 20th century). The former published a study of English dialects and the latter a still used grammar of English dialects at the beginning of the present century. It was not until the Survey of English Dialects, first under the auspices of Eugen Dieth and later of Harald Orton, that such intensive study of (rural) dialects was carried out (the results appeared in a series of publications in the 1950's and 1960's).

Dialect features The main divide between north and south can be drawn by using the pronunciation of the word *but*. Either it has a /u/ sound (in the north) or the lowered and unrounded realisation typical of Received Pronunciation in the centre and south, /ʌ/. An additional isogloss is the use of a dark /ɹ/ in the south versus a clear /l/ in the north. The south can be divided by the use of syllable-final /r/ which is to be found in the south western dialects but not in those of the south east. The latter show 'initial softening' as in *single, father, think* with the voiced initial sounds /z-, v-, ð/ respectively.