PG EG S2 - 04 (DSE)

TWO YEAR MARSTER'S DEGREE COURSE

(CBCS in Accordance with NEP 2020)

SEMESTER - II

LANGUAGE, LINGUISTICS AND GRAMMAR

ENGLISH

Padmanath Gohainbaruah School of Humanities

KRISHNA KANTA HANDIQUI STATE OPEN UNIVERSITY

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DSE 2 : LANGUAGE, LINGUISTICS AND GRAMMAR

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COURSE INTRODUCTION

This is the **2nd Discipline Specific Elective (DSE) Course** of the MA English Programme. This course introduces the learners to the basic concepts of English Language, Linguistics and Grammar. This Course is divided into 3 Blocks that would contain total 15 units. In these units, the learners will gain access to the very basic aspects of Language and Linguistics, some important aspects of English Grammar, English Phonetics and Phonology, Morphology, Syntax and Semantics. However, an attempt is also made in this course to trace the historical development of the English language. **Block 1** of the Course shall deal with the History of the English Language and Phonetics, **Block 2** shall deal with Morphology, Syntax and Semantics, and **Block 3** shall deal with the Branches of Linguistics.

BLOCK INTRODUCTION

Block 1 of the DSE Course 2 deals with History of the English Language and Phonetics and contains total 5 units, i.e. Units 1-5.

Units 1 & 2: History of the English Language I & II shall introduce us to the various approaches to the history of the English language. One approach could be to go back to the dawn of human civilization or even further down to primitive time to the various theories that could throw light on how language in general originated. Among other approaches, mention should be made of The Divine Source Theory, The Natural Sound Source Theory, The Pooh Pooh Theory, The Ding Dong Theory, The Gesture Theory and so on. There are however, some other approaches propounded from time to time that give readers opportunities for speculating on how and why language originated. We take in this unit these theories as starting point of our history of English language. A discussion on how subsequent changes, since the Renaissance to the present times has also been provided.

Unit 3: Introduction to Linguistics deals with Linguistics, which is a scientific study of language. The definition states that the scope of Linguistics is language. However, we should also ask what language is. In a general sense, language is a means of communication. We find that all living beings have the faculty of communication. However, humans are the only living species with the power of speech. In order to look at the basic feature of human language, it would be useful to draw a distinction between human language and other forms of communication, especially animal communication. An attempt has been made in this unit to throw some light on the features of human language and how it differs from animal communication.

Units 4 & 5: Phonology and Phonetics I & II discuss the ways by which speech sounds are produced or articulated in the vocal tract. Hence, these units are called “Phonology and Phonetics”. We shall also look at the physical properties of the speech sounds in different phonetic environments. We shall discover that the physical properties of the speech sounds are affected by the position in which a sound occurs.

Block 2 contains total five units, i.e., Units 6-10 and they deal mostly with Morphology, Syntax and Semantics.

Unit 6: Morphology discusses in sufficient detail theconcept of Morphology, which refers to the study of forms of words. However, to understand the concept of Morphology, it is pertinent to begin with a more familiar concept of the Word. The ‘morpheme’ has been seen as the smallest functioning unit in the composition of words. Thus, this unit will help us to look at morphemes in detail so that we can have a more comprehensive idea of the concept of Morphology.

Units 7 & 8: Syntax I & II shall take up the different constituents of the sentence and look at the ways by which their constituents are structured. We shall see how structural linguistics has attempted to describe the structure of sentences by using structuralist tools. The *Immediate Constituent Analyses* or I C Analyses, as it is called, is essentially a structuralist approach to the analysis of sentence structure. Structural linguistics applied what is known as the *discovery procedure* in its attempt to search for a set of operations for the correct description of a language structure. By the time we finish reading the unit, we shall be making use of different techniques of presenting sentence structures.

Units 9 & 10: Semantics I & II shall help us to read about yet another major branch of Linguistics, which is called Semantics. We all know that we use language to express meaning so that what we say or write is understood by others. This unit will help us to identify different types of meanings. By the end of the unit, we will learn that there are several approaches to the study of meaning in language. In this unit, we shall be concerned with the linguistic approach to the study of the semantic properties of languages.

Block 3 comprises five units, i.e. Units 11-15 that deal with the Branches of Linguistics such as Sociolinguistics, Psycholinguistics and English Language Teaching.

Units 11 & 12: Sociolinguistics 1 & II shall help you to discuss the field of sociolinguistics, which is a branch of linguistics as a study of all aspects of the relationship between language and society. You will learner that the scope of sociolinguistics includes various issues in relation to language in society notably studies on speech communities, investigations on the concepts of dialects and idiolects, studies on dialects, registers, code-switching and code mixing. We shall examine a few definitions of speech community and draw conclusions on the factors that constitute the formation of speech communities. Other areas of our concern taken up for discussion include a discussion on regional and social dialects, register and style besides code switching and code mixing. We have, in Unit 12, also discussed the concept of pidgin and Creole.

Unit 13: Psycholinguistics is concerned with a number of language learning theories that belong to the field of study known as Psycholinguistics. You will learn that Psycholinguistics is a branch of linguistics that is concerned with the study of the mental processes that are involved in producing and understanding language. Then, we discussed the nature and scope of this field by bringing out the interrelation between linguistics and psychology by stating that most areas of psychological inquiry notably thinking, learning, memory, attitude formation, language-learning behaviour etc. are the concern of linguistics as well.

Unit 14 & 15: English Language Teaching I & II deal with *English Language Teaching*, a term that has come to be known as ELT in the literature of language teaching. We begin by providing a historical overview of ELT. In this unit, we traced the history of teaching English in India from the point of the arrival of the East India Company to India. Next, we have tried to examine the concept of communicative competence in terms of two concepts propounded by Chomsky namely competence and performance. We have also taken up the issues on the sources and causes of L2 learners' errors beginning with a critical observation on contrastive analysis by stating that L1 transfer is not the only source of errors; there are other sources, a few of which we referred to. In Unit 15, we have discussed the three hierarchically related concepts of approach, method and technique of English Language Teaching.

While going through a unit, you may also notice some text boxes, which have been included to help you know some of the difficult terms and concepts. You will also read about some relevant ideas and concepts in "LET US KNOW" along with the text. We have kept "CHECK YOUR PROGRESS" questions in each unit. These have been designed to self-check your progress of study. The hints for the answers to these questions are given at the end of the unit. We strongly advise that you answer the questions immediately after you finish reading the section in which these questions occur. We have also included a few books in the "FURTHER READINGS" which will be helpful for your further consultation. The books referred to in the preparation of the units have been added at the end of the block. As you know the world of literature and criticism is too big, we strongly advise you not to take a unit to be an end in itself. Despite our attempts to make a unit self-contained, we advise that you read the original texts of the authors prescribed as well as other additional materials for a thorough understanding of the contents of a particular unit.

UNIT 1: HISTORY OF THE ENGLISH LANGUAGE I

UNIT STRUCTURE

1.1 Learning Objectives

1.2 Introduction

1.3 Origins of English

- 1.3.1 Anglo Saxon Period
- 1.3.2 Middle English Period
- 1.3.3 Modern English Period

1.4 Growth of Vocabulary

- 1.4.1 Borrowings from other Languages
- 1.4.2 Word Formation

1.5 Language Change: Grammar

1.6 Language Change: Spelling and Pronunciation

1.7 Basic Concepts of Language

- 1.7.1 Arbitrariness
- 1.7.2 Base
- 1.7.3 Comparative Philology
- 1.7.4 Dialects
- 1.7.5 Standard Language

1.8 Let us Sum up

1.9 Further Reading

1.10 Answers to Check Your Progress (Hints Only)

1.11 Possible Questions

1.1 LEARNING OBJECTIVES

After going through this unit, you will be able to:

- trace the descent of the English language from its Indo-European source
- explain how changes in the vocabulary of English have taken place
- evaluate the changes that have taken place in the grammatical system of English since the Old English period, and
- evaluate how the reforms in spelling and pronunciation have taken place in English at different stages.

1.2 INTRODUCTION

This is the first unit of Course 6: Language, Linguistics and Grammar. In this unit we shall discuss the history of the English language. However, we can begin this unit with a question. How do we approach the history of a language? One approach could be to go back to the dawn of human civilization or even down to primitive times to the various theories that could throw light on how languages originated. Some of these theories include the following:

a) **The Divine Source Theory:** This theory is based on the Biblical reference that "Adam gave names to all cattle, and to the fowl of the air and to every beast of the field." (Genesis 2:20). There are other bases too, for example, the Hindu tradition that believes that language originated from Bagdevi Saraswati. Many such hypotheses exist to the effect that the earliest writing systems were associated with divine images.

b) **The Natural Sound Source Theory:** Also known as the Bow-wow Theory, this theory holds that the earliest speech was produced by humans imitating natural sounds of creatures or objects which they were referring to. Thus, a dog came to be associated with its bark, its bow-wow; the snake with its hiss, the cuckoo with its two-fold notes and so on. In the imitative tendency of natural sounds by humans lies the origin of language.

c) **The Pooh Pooh Theory:** This theory holds that like humans themselves, their language also developed from a more primitive form of emotional interjections, evoked by pleasure, pain etc. This theory was put forward by Charles Darwin in his *Descent of Man* (1871) with the contention that our more rational language is a refinement upon these expressions of emotion. Many theorists looked down upon the theory with contempt and might have pooh-poohed it, and hence, the Pooh Pooh Theory. Other theorists however, contend that this theory underlies the origin of all languages.

d) **The Ding Dong Theory:** This theory propounded by Max Muller, the

German thinker, contends that the origin of language can be traced back to the sense of rhythm which is innate in humans. The theory contends that there is a mystic relationship between sound and meaning. The early humans had a tendency of imitation, but the imitation of movement rather than of sound. Examples include the pushing of the stream, the swaying of trees in the wind and so on.

e) **The Gesture Theory:** This theory advanced by Wilhelm Wundt and later restated by Richard Paget, contends that the earliest method of communication was by signs or gestures. Theorists observe that every gesture of the hand is accompanied by corresponding movements of the vocal organs, thereby creating words. Our hand -gestures supporting our speech underlie the basis of the theory.

These are some of the theories propounded from time to time and giving readers opportunities for speculating on how and why languages originated. Therefore, in this unit, we take these theories as the starting point of our history of English language. At the next stage of our history, it would be useful for us to trace the genealogy of English from its earliest parent language known as the Indo-European language.

1.3 ORIGINS OF ENGLISH

The study of the origins of a language requires us to study the history of a language. Thus, in order to explore the origins of English we have to trace the history of the language. How do we do that?

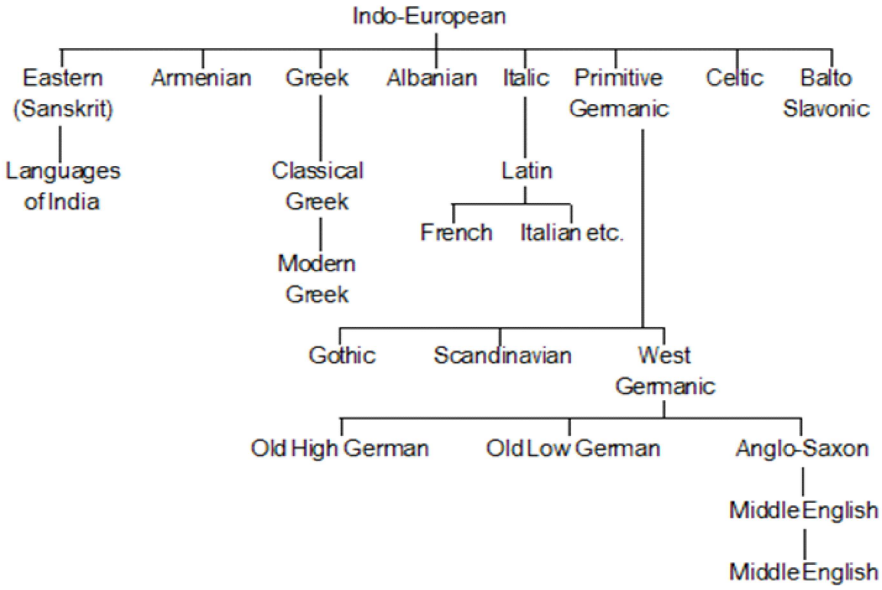
What is a language family? A language family refers to a set of languages deriving from a common ancestor or parent. A language family can be represented with the help of a family tree. Languages derived from a common parent show some common features, some shared properties. It is assumed that such systematic properties cannot be accidental. These similarities exist because the conceived languages are derived from a common parent. The languages that are derived from a common parent are referred to as daughter languages.

Comparative philologists have identified several families of languages existing in the world. But in the present context, we are interested

in the language family that includes most of the European tongues and also some of those of our country. The parent language of these languages is known by the term Indo-European. It has been speculated that the Indo-European speakers were nomadic tribes that wandered in the lands around the Black Sea about 3,000-4,000 years ago. These tribes split up into different groups and they moved in different directions across the continents of Europe and Asia. Each tribe of course, took along its parent language. But being isolated from the others, each language developed along its own lines so that in the course of years around 2,000 B.C. eight different languages evolved out of the original parent language.

Subsequently, these eight languages broke up into other different languages. The primitive Germanic language which evolved out of the parent Indo-European language, broke up into Gothic, Scandinavian and West Germanic. The West Germanic language, in its turn produced Old High German, Old Low German and Anglo-Saxon or Old English. The above account can be represented diagrammatically as follows:

The diagram shows the main branches of the Indo-European family of languages. The diagram shows a neat descent of the English language. The other branches have not been developed here because our main focus here is the descent of the English language. The diagram shows three stages of growth in the making of modern English namely, Anglo-Saxon,



Middle English and Modern English. In the subsequent sections we shall look at each stage of growth of the language by taking into account the various influences from other languages that had shaped the language to bring it to its present form. We shall also consider the changes in grammar, semantics and phonology taking place in English. But before that, we shall look at the three terms Anglo-Saxon, Middle English and Modern English a little more closely.

1.3.1 Anglo-Saxon Period

The term 'Anglo-Saxon' is used to refer to the language introduced in Britain by the Angles,

Saxons and Jutes were the tribes from North Germany that had descended with their hordes and invaded Britain. The earliest inhabitants of Britain were the Britons who spoke a form of Celtic. But with the invasion of these Germanic tribes, many of the Britons fled into the hills of Wales, Cornwall and Scotland, and henceforth, the tongue of the invaders become the tongue of Britain, or England as it now came to the called. Now-a-days Old English is the preferred term because it stresses the essential continuity of the language as is used today.

However, Old English was not a homogenous language. It had a number of dialects notably Northumbrian, Mercian, West Saxon and Kentish among which West Saxon was accepted as the standard form of the Vernacular. It is this dialect patronized by King Alfred, which is now accepted as the basis of our study of Old English.

Old English was a highly inflectional language. This character of the language can be seen by a close look at the various elements of grammar. For example, in Old English there were five possible endings to denote plural -as, -an, -u, -a and -o. In addition, there were some neuter nouns that had the same forms for the singular and plural.

Another characteristic of the language can be seen by the arbitrariness of some of its grammatical concepts. For example, the

gender system of Old English was a very arbitrary arrangement. The word *girl* was neuter gender while of the two words for *woman*, one was neuter and the other was masculine.

Though the invasions of Britain took place at different times, all were within the 5th century as recorded by Bede in the *Anglo-Saxon Chronicle*. However, the literary age began only after the arrival of the Roman missionaries led by Augustine, who came to Kent in 597. The rapid growth of monastic centres and an increasing literacy climate helped in the growth of Old English lyric, elegiac, heroic and war poems among which *Beowulf* is undoubtedly the chief literary work of the period. The literary works provides the corpus for a study of Old English vocabulary, syntax and meanings.

1.3.2 Middle English Period

Middle English, as the term indicates, stands midway between Old English and Modern English which, as a literary age, began with the Norman conquest of Britain in 1066. However, the year actually does not identify the linguistic boundary between Old and Middle English. It could be because of the imposition of French as the court language of England and the gradual decay of Anglo-Saxon traditions and practices that needed some time for Middle English to emerge as a distinct development in the history of the English language.

By the end of the 12th century, French continued to be the language of the court and was taught in schools. From 1204, there emerged a different political climate resulting from hostilities between King John of England and King Philip of France as a consequence of which the status of French diminished and a spirit of nationalism grew. The result was the widespread use of English in speech and writing culminating in the major achievements of Middle English literature in the hands of Geoffrey Chaucer, William Langland and John Gower.

The Middle English period is characterized by the emergence

of a number of dialects of the language notably, Northern, Southern, West Midland, East Midland and Kentish dialects. Just as in Anglo Saxon times, the dialect of Wessex attained the position of a kind of standard, so gradually during the Middle English period, the East Midland dialect came to occupy the status of a standard. There are several reasons for this. Most importantly, it was the language spoken in and around London, and as London became increasingly important as the centre of English life and affairs, East Midland dialect attained some amount of importance and prestige over the other dialects. Secondly, it was the language of scholarship patronized by the universities of Oxford and Cambridge. Thirdly, Chaucer and a number of prominent writers of his day chose this dialect for literary works. Moreover, this was the dialect favoured by Caxton, who printed his earlier books in this dialect.

The Middle English period is characterized by a number of changes that have taken place in different aspects of the languages of notably

- Grammatical changes
- Changes in pronunciation
- Changes in spelling
- Changes in and addition to the vocabulary

A study of these changes reveals that the changes from Old English to Middle English have been of a revolutionary nature.

At the level of grammar, the changes were in the direction of simplification by the reduction of inflection and acceptance of a fixed word order. Secondly, the substitution of natural for grammatical gender of a noun reduced a lot of arbitrariness in the language. Similarly, in pronunciation and spelling a lot of reforms were introduced especially in the case of the large number of words borrowed from French which were given native spellings and pronunciation.

At the level of vocabulary, the development that took place during the Middle English period was extensive. The Normans

introduced a new administrative, legal and military system in England as a consequence of which a large number of French words from these fields appeared in the English language. Other fields where the French influence is very prominent are the fields of religion, food and drink, fashion, leisure and arts etc. which provided a large number of words from French into English.

1.3.3 Modern English Period

The year 1500 is taken as the beginning of the Modern English period, because about this time the effects of the printing revolution initiated by Caxton (1422-1491) had become well-established. Historians of English agree that the Middle English period ends with the 15th century. When the first printed English book appeared in 1476, the phase of Middle English was virtually over. The language had assumed its modern form, except in spelling which had to wait till Dr. Johnson brought out his *A Dictionary of the English Language* (1755).

The Renaissance opened the doors of Modern English with the exposure to new scholarship and all that it implied. In the wake of the Renaissance followed the Reformation and this again, though its importance was primarily religious and political, had its effect upon the language. Among the greatest works of the Renaissance the plays of Shakespeare had exercised an overwhelming influence on the English language.

Another work of no less importance is the King James *Bible*. One doesn't have to be a Christian to hear the power of the words – simple in vocabulary, deeply emotional in their impact. King James Bible has sewn itself into the fabric of the language. If a child is ever the apple of her parents' eye or an idea seems as old as the hills, if we are at death's door or at out wits' end, if we have gone through a 'baptism of fire' or are about to 'bite the dust', it seems at times the blind are leading the blind or we are casting pearls before the swine, the King James *Bible*, whether we know it or not, is speaking through

us. Such is the influence of this remarkable Book on the English language.

The process of standardization of the English language has been a continuous endeavour in Modern English and it is in this context that Dr. Johnson's *Dictionary* attains a position of immense significance. It is through his dictionary that the language received its first authoritative treatment. The dictionary conferred stability on the language and at least with respect to spelling, this seems to be so. Moreover, the dictionary had succeeded in preserving the purity and ascertaining the meaning of the English idiom – an objective of the *Dictionary* as stated by Dr. Johnson himself in his 'Preface.'

The other contributors to the making of modern English include John Milton (1608-1674) who besides being the only major epic poet in English literature was a keen practitioner of the language. He not only added a number of words and phrases to the literary vocabulary but also brought about reforms in the spelling system. Like Spenser (1552-1599) and Shakespeare (1564-1616) before him, Milton's phrases which taken from their contexts have become familiar in all kinds of extended use in the language. The now common word *pandemonium* was coined by Milton. Expressions like *to save_appearances*, *a pillar of state* have become popular expressions today.

The contribution of the Romantic poets in general and William Wordsworth (1770-1850) in particular to the experimentation on poetic diction by using the language of day-to-day conversation is well known. He has professed in his poems to choose incidents from common life and to relate them as far as possible in a selection of language really used by men and to throw over them a certain colouring of the imagination whereby ordinary things should be presented to the mind in an unusual aspect.

Charles Dickens (1812-70) is another writer who has contributed very powerfully to the development of Modern English. His characters not only speak for themselves. Dickens often explicitly

draws out attention to their speech, identifying the stylistic basis of the comic effect. Mr. Micawber is a striking example of the pompous use of style in speech.

The list of contributors to the growth of Modern English can be very extensive with English today becoming a world language with access to a variety of electronic mediums. Indeed Modern English has come a long way from the language of ***Beowulf***.



CHECK YOUR PROGRESS

Q 1: Fill in the blanks with the appropriate words.

(a) The ..... theory holds that the earliest speech was produced by humans imitating natural sounds.

(b) The ..... theory contends that the origin of languages can be traced back to the sense of rhythm.

(c) The languages derived from a common parent language are known as ..... languages.

(d) ..... was spoken about 3,000 – 4,000 years ago in the lands around the Black sea.

(e) The Anglo-Saxon language is also known as .....

(f) Old English was a highly .....language.

(g) The standard dialect of Old English was .....

(h) The standard dialect of Middle English was .....

(i) William Caxton's name is associated with .....

(j) English today is a ..... language.

Q 2: Write a brief note on the contribution of King James *Bible* to the development of the English language.

1.4 GROWTH OF VOCABULARY

A study of the history of English language makes us aware of the changes that have taken place in the making of Modern English. There are changes that have taken place in the vocabulary, grammar, meaning and pronunciation of the language. We shall discuss some of the changes in vocabulary in this section.

The Oxford English Dictionary in its 1992 edition has claimed over 50,000 entries in the dictionary. It is indeed a staggering figure though the true figure is undoubtedly a great deal higher. Indeed, one of the major developments that have taken place in the English language is in the vocabulary. Many words of Old English and Middle English usage have either died out or have assumed new meanings. But more than that, the vocabulary of English has been enriched in the following two ways: (a) Borrowings from other languages, and (b) Word formation. Let us discuss each of these in the following sub-sections.

1.4.1 Borrowings from other Languages

The term 'borrowings' refers to the words or phrases that have been taken from one language and used in another language. Borrowings are also known as 'loan words'. Through the centuries loan words from various languages at different periods have contributed in a big way towards the changes taking place in the vocabulary of English. The influence began even from Celtic, the language of the native Britons prior to the arrival of the Angles and Saxons.

1. **Latin Borrowings:** The Latin influence on the English language began even prior to the arrival of Christianity. Latin words introduced into English at this age were mostly related to
   - Trade and commerce : ceap (cheap), pund (pound), minet (money) etc.
   - Domestic life: coc (cook), cytel (kettle), disc (dish).
   - Fruits and food: pea, plum, cheese, butter etc.

   Christianity in England gave words like church, Bishop, priest, minister, altar, angel etc. Moreover, Latin words from the field of scholarship, medicine, plant and animal life came to English both during the Old and the Middle English periods. The process of borrowing from Latin still continued in the modern period especially in the field of science and technology.

2. **Greek Borrowings:** Greek having been the European language which most fully and effectively developed the expression of philosophical ideas, it is obvious that ideas drawn from classical literature, philosophy, mathematics, geometry etc. should enter English. Most of the words of Greek origin extend the English language through Latin. Aristotle's *Poetics* has given words like tragedy, epic, comedy, theatre, theory, elegy, lyric etc. similarly, a large number of Greek words from the field of medical science entered English. Examples include neurology, psychology etc.

3. **French Borrowings:** With the Norman conquest of 1066, French became the court language of England during which time words of French origin were loaned to English in different fields.

   - *Buildings* : *castle, prison, chapel*
   - *Religion* : *grace*, *mercy, service*
   - *Military* : *sergeant, lieutenant, colonel*
   - *Domestic life* : *basin, lamp, table, fork, plate*
   - *Food* : *mutton, beef, fry, roast, pastry* etc.

   The French influence on the English language in the area of vocabulary continues even today. English continues to borrow from French from diverse fields notably automobile and aviation.

4. **Scandinavian Borrowings:** The Scandinavian influence on the English language belongs primarily to the Old English period, though their effects became visible only in Middle English to any marked extent. This is so because the Norse settlements were completed before the Norman Conquest. The contribution of these Viking settlers has been a very vital factor in the development of the English language. Indeed, a vast number of Scandinavian words came to some of the dialects of the Old English period. Most of the words are related to war and sea-faring. There are however, a few which relate to more

peaceful pursuits eg.

- *Nouns: husband, man, woman, father, mother, summer, winter* etc.
- *Verbs: can, will, meet, come, bring, die, hit, think, smile, ride, spun* etc.
- *Adjectives & Adverbs: full, good, better, best, over, under.* Looking at the bulk of words of Scandinavian origin, there are very few words now which can be recognized as foreign. The others have become so thoroughly assimilated that it is difficult to think of them as foreign words.

5. **Other Borrowings:** With the increased developments in foreign trade and commerce and colonial expansion of England, it is to be expected that a large number of words entered English both from languages within Europe as well as languages outside Europe. Within Europe, a number of Germanic languages, notably Italian, had influenced the vocabulary of English. The Italian influence can be seen in the literary borrowings of Chaucer, Spenser and few other writers.

However, borrowings from outside Europe include those from former colonies like Arabia, Africa and India and the Far East, the British settlements in New Zealand, and Australia among others. Words of Arab origin include *algebra, cipher, zenith, admiral, cotton, amber, assassin, magazine* etc. Words of Indian origin include: *sahib, mongoose, bungalow* and a lots of other words.

1.4.2 Word Formation

One of the reasons for the rapid expansion of vocabulary is that English allows the creation of new words. Though word formation is a productive process, it is governed by certain rules. Here we shall look at some of the processes of word formation in English.

1. **Compounding:** It has long been recognized that words can be classified into two categories known as simple and complex. The term simple words refer to a linguistic unit which consists of a single free morpheme or a base form. The dictionary entries of a word is generally the base form. For example in dictionaries you get the word book. It is the base form of the word. They are distinguished from complex words because complex words are made up of prefixes and suffixes which are often attached to the base form. For example, book with the plural suffix attached, gives us the word books which is a complex word. Easy is a simple word, uneasy is a complex word; like is a simple word, dislike is a complex word etc. On the other hand, compound words refer to those words that are created by the process of compounding. The process of compounding involves combining two or more existing words in order to form a new word. For example:

   (1) Verb + noun: pick-pocket, tell-tale, search-light.

   (2) Adjective + noun: black-board, common-sense, high-way, green-house, blue-blood, quick-silver etc.

   (3) Noun + noun: goldsmith, newspaper, homework, rainbow, headmaster, night-guard.

   (4) Noun + adjective: duty-free, home-sick, sea-sick, colour-blind, life-long, world-wide, knee-deep.

   (5) Adverb + Verb: outbid, outlive, overcome, overlook, overtake, undermine, uphold, upset.

   (6) Verb + Adverb: farewell, breakdown, lockup

   (7) Noun + verb + ing: bird-watching, fault-finding

   (8) Noun + Verb + or/er: tax-collector, news-reader

   (9) Verb + ing + noun: working-girl, dressing-room

   Sometimes you may have longer construction as compound words e.g. man-of-war, lady-in-waiting. It is possible to form some adhoc compound words in a context, e.g. A buy-now-pay-later scheme.

2. **Affixation:** A very ancient process of word-formation, affixation involves the adding of prefixes and suffixes to a stem in order to create new words. During the Old English period, a large number of English words were produced by this process. Examples include:

a) Suffixing:

i) –dam	:	kingdom, freedom, boredom
ii) –ship	:	friendship, fellowship, scholarship
iii) –y	:	healthy, sticky
iv) –ish	:	clownish, boyish, stylish
v) –ness	:	swiftness richness, happiness
vi) –hood	:	childhood, manhood
vii) –ive	:	attractive, affirmative
viii) –less	:	helpless, childless, powerless

b) Prefixation:

i) a-	:	adrift, ashore, alike
ii) be-	:	belittle, befriend
iii) bi-	:	bicycle, bilingual, bi-weekly
iv) de-	:	decontrol, devalue, decentralize
v) dis-	:	dislike, disbelieve, dishonour
vi) en-	:	enlist, enlarge, endanger

The extent to which words can be created by the addition of prefixes and suffixes to the base form is indeed almost unlimited.

3. **Conversion:** It is one of the characteristics of the English language that a word from one word class can be converted to another for use in a sentence. The use of a noun as a verb or an adjective or vice versa is called conversion. Thus, from the noun park, which is an open space where cars may be left, is coined the verb to park as in I parked the car outside the gate. The noun pocket can be used as a verb as in to pocket. Nouns like head, hand, stomach, back etc. can all be used as verbs. We can head a ball, hand in a letter, stomach an insult etc.

4. **Reduplication:** In English a large number of words especially those words which describe sounds and movements are imitative in nature. Words that are created by the process of imitation of sounds or movements are said to be created by the process of reduplication. Examples include: bang, pop, buzz, click, whizz, rumble, hiss, giggle etc. These are words belonging to this category.
5. **Clipping:** It is a process of word formation by means of which a longer word is clipped or shortened to make it monosyllabic word and thereby create a new word that may subsist at different levels of the language. They may even compete against each other for sole acceptance. e.g.
   i) Clipping at the end
      pop (popular concert)
      pub (public house)
      cab (cabriolet)
      mob (mobile vulgus)
   ii) Clipping made at the beginning
      bus (omnibus)
      phone (telephone)
      wig (periwig)
   iii) Clipping made at both ends
      flu (influenza)
      fridge (refrigerator)

   Some of the clipped words have become so popular that their original forms have passed into oblivion.
6. **Blending:** Blending is a process of word formation in which a part of one word is combined with a part of another word in order to form a new word carrying with it the idea behind both the original words. For example:
   - motel: blend of the first part of motor and the second part of the word hotel. The word motel thus refers to a hotel where there are facilities for parking cars.

- brunch: blend of the first part of breakfast and the second part of lunch. The word brunch thus refers to a snack taken after breakfast but before lunch.
- smog: blend of the first part of smoke and the last part of fog.
- telecast: blend of the first part of television and the last part of broadcast.
- motorcade : blend of the first part of motor car and the second part of cavalcade.

7. **Back Formation:** Words created by this process are really the result of misunderstanding, though a few have been deliberate. The principle and the way it works can be explained by the adverb grovelling which existed in the 17th century to mean in an abject manner, on the ground as in *He lay grovelling in the dust.* Though the word is an adverb of manner, the word created the misunderstanding that the word is a verb + present participle-'ing' form. Thus, through misunderstanding we have got the verb to *grovel*. Other examples include *editor, peddler, beggar* and so on.

English poets and prose writers through the centuries have created new words in the language. In the 20th century the print media has contributed in a big way towards neologism, that is, the creation of new words in the language. For example, T.S. Eliot, in 1920, created the word 'fore-suffer' in *The Waste Land.*

1.5 LANGUAGE CHANGE: GRAMMAR

Old English had a very complicated grammar. There were two declensions of the adjective- strong and weak – and for its nouns, it had the three gender system, but fixed very arbitrarily. The arbitrary nature of the gender system was such that the word for girl was neuter while of the two words for woman, one was neuter and the other masculine.

Old English was also a highly inflected language. The example of the inflections of nouns has already been cited at 1.3.1 to explain the nature

of inflections in a single grammatical concept. We noted that in Old English there were five possible endings to denote plural. In addition, there were some 'neuter' nouns that had the same form for the singular and the plural. The plural deer and sheep came directly from Old English.

Secondly, one can refer to the inflections in adjectives in Old English as mentioned at the beginning. The strong declension of the adjective is used with a noun when not accompanied by a definite article or other determiners. The weak declension is used when the noun is preceded by such a word.

Grammatical changes taking place was largely to reduce these inflections and to weed out the arbitrariness in the grammatical terms. We can take the noun as an example again. In the Middle English period, by about 1400, the five grammatical plural endings had, with one or two exceptions, been reduced to two –es and –s (both developed from-es). The Old English – an (later-en) ending for the plural is still retained in modern English in words like oxen, brethren etc. The OE plural for cild (child) was cildru; for brother, it was brothru. Then to what were actually plural words, an extra plural ending – en was added making nouns like children, brethren etc.

Apart from the nouns, changes have also taken place in other word classes notably adjectives and adverbs. These two word classes have lost their OE inflections by the ME period and in their place the comparative and superlative degree endings were introduced. The two methods commonly used to form degrees of comparison e.g. –er for comparative and –est for superlative along with more and most are later developments. Double comparatives and superlatives existed in the early part of the modern age. References can be made of Antony's speech in Shakespeare's *Julius Caesar* wherein Antonio exclaims that the stabs on Caeser's body by Brutus as "this was the most unkindest cut of all."

In the sixteenth century the personal pronouns thou, thy, thee had become archaic with the introduction of you, your and ye as the usual pronouns in direct address. Besides, who as a relative pronoun and which and that as alternatives became popularized during this time.

The verbal endings of –eth as in telleth, giveth etc. as the third person singular number verb form underwent a change during the 15th century and the –s suffix is used in their place. About this time, the present progressive form began to attain immense popularity. The passive is a still later development.

Besides, the OE gender system had already undergone a massive change by the ME period itself which recommended for the substitution of natural for grammatical gender. Consequently, everything for the male sex was considered masculine; everything for the female sex was considered feminine and all other things neuter. It is notable that the personal pronoun she which has arrived in the ME period subsequently replaced heo, the OE word for she.

Another important development in ME grammar was the fixing of word order. In OE, the word order in sentence structure was not fixed. Authors of that period often took liberties with the word order because of the lack of a fixed word order.

1.6 LANGUAGE CHANGE: SPELLING AND PRONUNCIATION

Prior to the arrival of Christianity in England, the earliest manuscripts of Old English (OE) were written in the runic alphabet. The Roman alphabet was introduced by the Christian missionaries. The 23 letters of the Latin alphabet were applied to OE sound system in a systematic way with the addition of four new symbols to represent unfamiliar sounds : (ash), (thorn), (eth) and(wynn); also g appeared in a modified form as z. Apart from these four additions, OE alphabet was similar to the ones still in use except for the fact that there were no capital letters in OE.

Considering that we have some knowledge of how the Roman script is pronounced, we can work backwards from later stages of the languages to make deductions about how OE might have sounded. However, since the spelling of OE words was quite different from that of Modern English, the spelling-pronunciation closeness of OE might have been some problem areas of speech for the modern speaker to gather.

With the Middle English (ME) period, a number of reforms were introduced in spelling due to the French influence. The Norman scribes listened to the English they heard around them and began to spell it according to the conventions they had previously used for English; e.g. the French introduced.

- qu for cw queen for cwen.
- gh in words like right, enough instead of h.
- ch in words like church instead of c.
- ou in place of u in words like house.

Because of such features in spelling there was a noticeable change in pronunciation as well. French loan words introduced new diphthongs like /OI/and/UI/. Several OE sounds disappeared during the ME period, especially the /x/ close to our 'ME' in Assamese. Indeed, the me period was a vibrant period of reforms in sound and spelling. English spelling was a mixture of two systems – Old English and French.

Even a generation after Caxton who had pioneered printing in England in 1476, English spelling still continued to be in an inconsistent state. It is true that with the printed works coming out, there were clear signs of standardization, the irregularity remained. During the 17th century, there was a conscious attempt to standardize spelling by bringing out spelling guides for use in schools. These guides influenced printing practice. By the middle of the 17th century, printing conventions had become highly regularized and the gulf was established between the forms of speech and their written representations.

However, it was not until Dr. Samuel Johnson (1709-1784) completed *A Dictionary of the English Language* (1775) that English spelling received its first authoritative treatments. The dictionary conferred stability to the spelling system of English. Meanwhile, Noah Webster's *A Compendious Dictionary of the English Language* (1806) appeared which had further brought in regularity to the English spelling system through Webster advocated for certain reforms by weeding out superfluous letters (letters not contributing to pronunciation eg. 'u' in labour). Consequently, there developed differences in British and American spelling systems.



CHECK YOUR PROGRESS

Q 3: Fill in the blanks with appropriate words:

a) Borrowings are also known as .....

b) The court language of England subsequent to the Norman Conquest of 1066 was .....

c) Changes in gender system of English in the ME period included replacing ..... gender by ..... gender.

d) The publication of ..... for school contributed to the standardization & spelling.

Q 4: Write short notes on:

a) Compounding b) affixation

c) conversion d) clipping

e) Back formation f) Blend

1.7 BASIC CONCEPTS OF LANGUAGE

In this section, we shall take a close look at some of the basic concepts of language. It is felt that a brief explanation of these concepts will help you in understanding these concepts when you come across them in the block.

1.7.1 Arbitrariness

The term 'arbitrariness' is considered to be a defining feature of language. The arbitrary nature of the language is visible at different stages of its history. For example, the gender system in the Old English period displayed an amazing arbitrariness with the word girl as masculine gender.

At another level, we talk about arbitrariness in the naming of things. In general, there is no inherent relation between the sound that makes up the word and object signified by the word. The relationship between them is arbitrary. Hence the same animal may be called differently as dog, chien, hund, kutta etc. in different languages – English, French, German and Hindi respectively.

1.7.2 Base

A term drawn from morphology, it refers to that part of the word which appears as a unit in itself. The unit can take an affix. For example in birds, the base form is bird, while –s is the plural suffix attached to it. Similarly, in the word walked, the base form is walk and the –ed suffix attached to the base form is the past tense affix. In Old English, the base form of the noun could take as many as five different plural suffixes.

1.7.3 Comparative Philology

Comparative philology refers to the study of language history. Scholars who study the history of languages are sometimes called comparative philologists or just philologists. The philological tradition is one of painstaking textual analysis often related to literary history. It makes use of a fairly traditional descriptive framework. The approach of the philologists to a study of the history of languages is often complementary to the approach followed by historical linguistics.

1.7.4 Dialects

You have come across terms like Northumbrian, Mercian, West Saxon, Kentish, West Midland, East Midland as names of dialects that had existed at different stages of its history. We can define such a dialect as a regionally distinctive variety of a language. A language having a reasonably large number of speakers of the language spread over a vast geographical area can develop regional features which are distinctive. Today, in England, we talk about Scottish dialect, Lancashire dialect etc. which are regional dialects of English.

At another level, we can look at language variations from a social hierarchical point of views. The upper classes of London speak a variety of English which shows marked variations from the variety used by the working classes. These are different class or social dialects of English.

1.7.5 Standard Language

The term refers to a prestige variety of a language used by a speech community and cuts across regional varieties of the language called regional dialects. A standard language is an institutionalized norm which can be used by the mass media. It is the variety used for teaching the language in a formal framework besides being the language of scholarship. Very often one of the existing dialects assume the status of a standard dialect. Or it may be that the dialect used as the standard variety is an entirely different language variety. There are a number of steps involved in the process of standardization of a language. For example, it becomes necessary to make a selection of the variety that will have a wider acceptance as a standard from amongst the dialects used within a speech community. Secondly, it becomes necessary to codify the language in terms of grammar, pronunciation, spelling and other writing conventions. Moreover, the language should be able to elaborate its functions in the society.



1.8 LET US SUM UP

In this opening unit of the Course on Language, Linguistics and Grammar, attempt was made to introduce you to the different theories that could throw light on how languages originated e.g., the Divine Source theory, the Pooh Pooh theory etc. We discussed the origins of English by tracing the descent of the English language from Indo-European. We also discussed the different stages of development of the English language in its three periods namely Old English, Middle English and Modern English. Next, we discussed the different stages of changes taking place in the English language at the level of vocabulary, grammar and spelling. Moreover, we discussed some basic concepts of language drawn from this unit. The unit undoubtedly is a very ambitious work as it tried to encompass the whole

grammar of the English language from the Old English period to the Modern English.



1.9 FURTHER READING

1) Alexander, Michael. (2009). *A History of English Literature*. London: Palgrave Foundations.
2) Baugh, A. C. & Cable, T. (1993). *A History of the English Language.* (4th Ed.). Rutledge.
3) Crystal, David. (1993). *The Cambridge Encyclopedia of the English Language*. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press.
4) Jesperson, Otto. (1982). *Growth and Structure of the English language.* New Delhi: Oxford University Press.
5) Lyons, John. (1981). *Language and Linguistics*. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press
6) Wood, F. T. (1969). *An Outline History of the English Language*. Macmillan.
7) Wrenn, C. L. (2011). *The English Language*. New Delhi: Vikas Publishing House.



1.10 ANSWERS TO CHECK YOUR PROGRESS (HINTS ONLY)

Ans to Q 1: a) Natural Sound Source, b) Ding Dong, c) daughter, d) Indo-European, e) Inflectional, f) West Saxon, g) East Midland, h) the printing press, i) world

Ans to Q 2: See 1.3.3 and read F. T. Wood PP 91-92

Ans to Q 3: a) loan words, b) French, c) grammatical gender/natural gender, d) spelling guides

Ans to Q 4: See 14.2



1.11 POSSIBLE QUESTIONS

Q 1: What is a language family? Discuss the language family of Modern English.

Q 2: Write a note on the changes in the spelling system of English.

Q 3: Write brief notes on

a) Latin Borrowings

b) Scandinavian Borrowings

c) French Borrowings

Q 4: Write a note on the different processes of word formation with reference to English.

Q 5: Write a note on the grammatical changes taking place in English from the Old English period till the modern age.

Q 6: Write short notes on

a) Dialect

b) Standard Language

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UNIT 2: HISTORY OF THE ENGLISH LANGUAGE II

UNIT STRUCTURE

2.1 Learning Objectives

2.2 Introduction

2.3 Renaissance: Rise of Modern English

2.4 Change of Meaning

- 2.4.1 Generalisation
- 2.4.2 Specialisation
- 2.4.3 Differentiation
- 2.4.4 Association of Ideas

2.5 Contributors to the development of English

- 2.5.1 The Contribution of William Shakespeare
- 2.5.2 The Contribution of Dr. Johnson
- 2.5.3 The Contribution of T.S. Eliot
- 2.5.4 The Contribution of the Bible

2.6 American English

- 2.6.1 Changes in Vocabulary
- 2.6.2 Changes in Spelling
- 2.6.3 Changes in Grammar
- 2.6.4 Changes in Pronunciation

2.7 Let us Sum up

2.8 Further Reading

2.9 Answers to Check Your Progress (Hints Only)

2.10 Possible Questions

2.1 LEARNING OBJECTIVES

After going through unit, you will be able to

- Explain the process of the rise of Modern English
- appreciate how changes of meaning of words take place
- appreciate the contributions of eminent authors to the growth of English
- distinguish the features of American English.

2.2 INTRODUCTION

This unit takes up a survey of the growth of the English language from the point where we had stopped in Unit I. We shall begin our discussion with the Renaissance as the point of departure of Middle English period to usher in a period of rapid growth and development of ideas, literary forms and styles. We shall stress upon the print revolution in England that began roughly in 1500 as the starting point of the Renaissance. Along with the Reformation that followed, the Renaissance has been seen as the key-factor in the transition of the language from its Middle English status to its Modern English status. Then, we shall consider a few of the distinctive ways by which words change their meaning notably through the process of generalization, specialization, extension or transference of meaning and a few other processes. Then, we further move on to eminent writers of the English language and literature who had contributed in a significant way towards the development of English through different periods of its history. We mention the contribution of Geoffrey Chaucer, Edmund Spenser, William Shakespeare, John Milton, Dr. Samuel Johnson and T.S. Eliot. Lastly, we move on to the distinctive features of American English by tracing its development in America and presenting its contrast with British English at the levels of spelling, pronunciation, vocabulary and grammar.

2.3 RENAISSANCE: RISE OF MODERN ENGLISH

The term “Renaissance” is a French word meaning “rebirth”. The term is used in English literature to refer to the period of literary history following the Middle English period. In other words, Renaissance as a literary period marked the departure of the Middle English period to usher in a period of rapid growth and development of ideas, literary forms and styles whose resources were drawn from the literary scholarship of classical Greece and Rome. However, more than anything else, it is the start of the print revolution in England in 1470 when William Caxton (1422-1491) set up his printing press at Westminster that led to the flowering of the Renaissance in England. In fact, the period from the time of Caxton, that is, around 1500

until around 1650, was later to be called the Renaissance. It also included the Reformation led by Martin Luther (1483-1546) essentially a religious and political movement that brought about reforms in the institution of the Roman Catholic Church. Besides, the Renaissance included the discoveries of Copernicus that drew the curtains on the medieval Ptolemaic conception of the universe. It further included the European exploration of Africa and the Americas.

The advent of the print revolution has been seen as a key-factor in the transition of the English language from its Middle English status to its Modern English status. This transition was affected by the publication of a large number of transitional literary texts by the celebrated printer Caxton. These texts include the poetical works of Geoffrey Chaucer (1340-1400) especially *The Canterbury Tales* and the works of John Gower (1330-1408) especially *Confessio Amantis,* his only English poem. Printing of the bulk of Chaucer's works tended to establish the East Midland dialect used by Chaucer as a standard language and to discredit other dialects that were in vogue at that time.(See 1.3.2). Other transitional texts include the prose work of Chaucer titled *Boethus* and the prose romance of Sir Thomas Malory (d 1471) titled *Morte D' Arthur* besides a miscellany of statutes, phrase books, devotional texts and a Latin Grammar. Moreover, there were the cycles of miracles and mystery plays preserved in several 15th century manuscripts. There are many points of grammar vocabulary and spelling which cause difficulty to the 21st century readers, but overall, the language is familiar and intelligible without much editorial intervention of these texts.

In the wake of the Renaissance, there followed the Reformation. As stated earlier, though its importance was primarily religious and political, it had a profound effect on the English language. A very important outcome of the Reformation was the various English translations of the Bible, the chief being William Tyndale's (?1494-1536) in 1526 and more importantly, the Authorized Version in 1611. Perhaps the latter was more influential than any other single factor in 'fixing' the English language and setting some kind of a standard. It is notable that throughout the next three centuries the Authorized Version of the Bible also called King James Version (KJV)

remained the people's book which they heard read Sunday by Sunday in the church and with which they became familiar as with no other. The fact that apart from a word here and there which had changed its meaning, the reader is apt to feel that the English of the KJV is the English of today.

A remarkable achievement of the Renaissance on the English language was in the growth of vocabulary. There were no words in the language to talk accurately about the concepts, techniques and inventions which were coming from Europe and elsewhere into England. Most of the words which entered the language during the Renaissance were taken from Latin, with a good number from Greek, French, Italian, Spanish and Portuguese. Samples of a few words are given here.

- *From Latin and Greek:*

  adapt, agile, anonymous, appropriate, assassinate, atmosphere, autograph, benefit, capsule, catastrophe, chaos, climax, conspicuous, contradictory, crisis, criterion, critic, delirium, denunciation, emancipate, emphasis, enthusiasm, eradicate, exact, fact, glottis, habitual, halo, idiosyncrasy, immaturity, impersonal, jocular, lexicon, malignant, monopoly, necessitate, obstruction, pathetic, relaxation, relevant, scheme, skeleton, tactics, temperature, ulna, utopian, vacuum.

- *From French*

  alloy, anatomy, battery, chocolate, comrade, detail, duel, entrance, explore, grotesque, invite, moustache, naturalize, passport, pioneer, shock, ticket, vogue, volunteer.

- *From Italian*

  argosy, balcony, carnival, design, fuse, lottery, macaroni, opera, rocket, solo, trill, violin

- *From Spanish and Portuguese*

  alligator, apricot, armada, banana, barricade, canoe, cockroach, guitar, hammock, hurricane, maize, mosquito, potato, tank, tobacco, yam

- *From other languages*

  bamboo (Malay), bazaar (Persian), caravan (Persian), coffee (Turkish) cruise (Dutch), curry (Tamil), guru (Hindi), harem (Arabic) etc.

  These are only a few examples culled from authoritative texts. What

is important to remember is that the influence of these foreign words that have come into English, was found operative in a number of ways.

(a) One of them was to introduce Latin adjectives against English nouns, e.g. mouth – oral, nose – nasal, eye – ocular, mind – mental, sun – solar, moon – lunar, book – literal etc.

(b) Again, in some cases, the Latin and English synonyms do not exactly convey the same sense e.g. readable – legible, share – portion, youthful – juvenile, same – identical, womanly – female etc.

(c) Besides, Latin words formed a very large number of hybrids with English by the use of Latin prefixes (ex-, anti-, co-, inter- etc.) to English words e.g. ex-headmaster, anti-slavery, co-worker, inter-college, pre-war, re-organize, de-centralize etc.

(d) Likewise, Latin words formed a very large number of hybrids with English by the use of Latin suffixes (-ite, -ism, -ation, -ist,-ize, etc) as in socialite, hedonism, starvation, moralist, humanize,

Notable contributions to the transition of the English language to Modern English was made by a number of authors and scholars among whom the names of William Shakespeare (1564-1616), John Milton(1608-1674), Dr. Samuel Johnson (1709-1784), Matthew Arnold (1822-1888) and T.S. Eliot (1888-1965) stand out. Shakespeare's impact on the English language was chiefly in the area of the lexicon; he contributed a large number of words to the language. His plays and poetical works provide countless instances of the way English was developing at that time. (The contribution of these writers and the Bible towards the growth of the English language is taken up in 2.5.)



CHECK YOUR PROGRESS

Q 1: Give brief answers to the following questions.

(a) Explain the term "Renaissance".

(b) Name two transitional English texts produced during the early stages of the English Renaissance.

(c) Name the well-known work of Sir Thomas Malory.

(d) Explain how the print revolution happened in England.

2.4 CHANGE OF MEANING

One of the characteristics of the vocabulary of the English language is that countless words in the language have changed or modified their meanings. It is quite natural in any language that his should happen. This is so because no vocabulary of a language, however rich or resourceful it may be, is adequate to meet the changing demands of expression in a language. Words or expressions cannot be invented constantly to meet the continuous demands. Hence, in many cases existing words are used as basis in order to develop newer forms or word class to provide newer meaning for effective expression. Here an attempt is made to discuss a few of the ways by which words change their meaning.

2.4.1 Generalization

Generalization refers to a process by which words in the language that have a specialized or restricted meaning is generalized in order to provide wider application. A striking example is the word *box.* It is one of the most generalized of nouns today in the English language. OALD (7th Ed.) records as many as twelve meanings of the word in the noun form besides a host of coinages with the word e.g. box-car, box-office, box-lunch, box-room etc. however, originally the word had a very restricted meaning. It meant a small casket made out of box-wood that was used for keeping jewellery. Gradually, less insistence was made on the material out of which a box was made. A box could be made of any material and of any size besides its extensions like box-office, or a box in a parcel office large enough to be moved by several people.

Other words include *journey* and *journal*, both derived from French. Originally, the meaning of journey was a day's travel and of journal, a daily record of events. However, through a process of generalization, the restricted meaning of journey has been extended to cover a journey of any length of time. Similarly, the meaning of journal has been generalized to cover a publication of any length of

time as in *Scrutiny* was a quarterly journal. An interesting word is *tragedy,* a term which is no longer used in its strictly dramatic sense, but has come to mean any occurrence which is felt to be a great event causing sadness and shock as in “The death of his wife was a personal tragedy for him”.

2.4.2 Specialization

Specialization as a process of meaning change can be seen just as the reverse of generalization. While in the case of generalization the specific meaning of words become generalized, in the case of specialization the generalized meaning of words becomes specialized. For example, in the fourteenth and fifteenth centuries, the usual word for a bird was fowl. In the Authorised Version of the Bible, too it is used in the same sense. But the word *bird* also existed in Old English a *brid* and in Middle English as *barde* side by side.(ref, *Oxford Dictionary of English Etymology*) and the result was that for a time the two words were used indiscriminately as alternatives. But gradually bird came to be the general term while fowl took on a specialised meaning. Similar is the case with deer. In Old English, the word meant a wild animal and as late as 1481, Caxton used it in that sense. But presently, the word has undertaken a specialized meaning to refer to an antlered animal.

The process of specialization is still operative in the present time and a number of words or terms which in reality are general in their application are in the process of acquiring a much narrower and more specialized meaning. Thus, the noun *prohibition*, derived from the word *prohibit*, actually means the act of forbidding something. But the specialized meaning is associated with the prohibition of liquor.

2.4.3 Differentiation of Meaning

Differentiation is a combination of generalization and specialization. In this case, our mind differentiates between the

original meaning and the newly acquired one. As an example, we take the word *ring* as in 'to give someone a ring' in which case, we do not expect to receive a ring to be worn in the finger. We know that ring in this case means a telephone call. Similarly, to drop someone a line doesn't mean dropping a fishing line but a brief message. There are scores of examples recorded in a good dictionary how words through a process of extension or transference followed by differentiation conveys different meanings. Examples include words like the names of animals, birds and parts of the human body. The resemblance of the bird called crane and the machine of the same name is quite obvious. Of the limbs or organs of the body so used, the chief are the leg, the arm, the foot, the eye, the lip, the fingers, the neck and the head. We are familiar with such expressions such as the foot of a mountain or hill (foot-hill), the eye of a needle, the head of a page, the hand of a clock and so on. The word horse refers to an animal, but the word is also used now in relation to the units of power of machines such as five-horse power.

2.4.4 Association of Ideas

The term association of ideas refers to a process by which words change their meaning through a gradual shifting of emphasis from the original, fundamental meaning to some incidental or associated characteristics. The word *villain* is a striking example of how words change their meaning through association of ideas. The word originally meant a labourer on a manorial estate. However, from the association of the person's shabby and untidy appearance, the word undertook a different meaning to mean a 'tramp'.

Another word of this category is *vulgarity*. The word originally came from Latin *vulgus* which basically means a crowd. By an association of ideas, the original meaning of the word attained a different meaning. Today the word means demonstrating very rude, mean or crude behaviour.

There are a few other ways by which words can change their meaning. For example, sometimes a word may attain a new significance or lose its former significance or attain a metaphorical significance thereby attaining new meaning.



CHECK YOUR PROGRESS

Q 2: Give brief answers:

(a) Give the original meaning of the word 'box'.

(b) State how the word fowl changed its meaning.

(c) Give an example of a word that changed its meaning through differentiation of meaning.

(d) Give a word note of villain.

2.5 CONTRIBUTORS TO THE DEVELOPMENT OF ENGLISH

A study of the literary history of English shows that there had appeared from time to time eminent literary men – poets, dramatists and novelists who had exercised a profound influence on the development of the English language. If we go back to the fourteenth century, we must mention Geoffrey Chaucer (1340 – 1400). As a poet, he was the inheritor of and accomplished imitator of the rich literature of France and Italy, which may loosely be called courtly. Its characteristics were ornate, decorative, rhetorical effects and artificiality. It was a literature intended for aristocratic consumption. At the same time, at the other extreme was a kind of language Chaucer knew from his own experience: colloquial and graphic. It was a language that had influenced modern poetic vocabulary giving him the accolade "the father of modern English poetry".

Likewise, Edmund Spenser (1552—1599) is credited for a poetic diction that is the most appropriate vehicle for his thoughts. Modern English vocabulary has retained some distinct traces of his literary influence. His great service to the English language is that he revived old and obsolete words from Chaucer, William Langland (1330 —1386) and Sir Thomas Malory (d 1471). His poetry is full of archaic words which he deliberately

uses to infuse new life into them. Examples include *anon, doom, eyen* (eyes), *life* (dear) *read* (advise), *sith* (since) etc. Secondly, he gave a literary recognition to words and phrases from the language of country folk such as shepherds, thus anticipating William Wordsworth's (1770—1850) theory of poetic diction that the language of poetry should be the spoken language of the common people. We shall discuss a few other eminent writers here besides the contribution of the Bible to the development of the English language.

2.5.1 The Contribution of William Shakespeare

William Shakespeare (1564 – 1616) had undoubtedly exercised a profound influence on the English language by his superb handling of the language in his plays and poems including his 154 sonnets. The distinctiveness in his use of language can be studied from the point of view of coinage of words phrases and sentences.

Eminent authorities of the English language agree that Shakespeare's vocabulary is the richest ever employed by any single author. It is supposed to contain more than 20,000 words and in this respect, he stands in a much higher place than any other author as a potential force in the making of English. His originality is found in the rare use of popular religious and Christian terms. He seldom uses words commonly used in religious matters or rituals. He is fond of coining new words to suit his purpose. His coinage of single words and phrases is indeed remarkable. For example,

- By taking recourse to the French prefix –en, he coined a host of words that are a rich contribution to the lexicon. Examples include: *enact, embattle, endear, enkindle, enmesh, enrooted, enseemed.*
- He made use of compound words for achieving poetic effect with remarkable success e.g. *all-admiring, ale-washed, fat-brained, happy-valiant, full-fraught, pale-dead, tardy-gaited.*
- His manipulation of the prefix un- is responsible for many compounds such as *unless, unbody, uncharged, uncolted,*

unexpressive, unfathered, unfellowed, ungot unrooted etc.

- His coinage of phrases and idioms include: *salad days, sulken dalliance, mind's eye, ministering angel, tower of passion, pound of flesh, milk of human kindness, foregone conclusion, more honoured in the breach, sound and fury* etc.

Besides, Shakespeare had a huge influence on English. His legacy is a remarkable number of phrases in everyday use. They include:

(a) Brevity is the soul of wit.
(b) Something is rotten in the state of Denmark.
(c) Sweets are the uses of adversity.
(d) Beauty provoketh thieves sooner that gold.
(e) All the world's a stage.
(f) The green-eyed monster (referring to jealousy in *Othello*)
(g) The milk of human kindness.
(h) Salad days.

In matters of syntax, we discover that Shakespeare took great liberty with the language.

- It is the most unkindest cut of all.
- My native English now I must forgo.
- Neither a borrower nor a lender be.

Indeed, Shakespeare's contribution to the enrichment of the English language is impressive. His experimentations with poetic forms are his other contributions.

2.5.2 The Contribution of Dr. Johnson

Dr. Samuel Johnson (1709 – 1784) was the most prominent literary personality of 18th century England. A lexicographer, literary critic, poet and novelist, his single-most contribution to the development of the English language is *A Dictionary of the English Language* (1755) which has been regarded as the first authoritative treatment of the language. Over a seven year period, he wrote the definitions of 40,000 words, illustrating their use from the best authors

since the time of the Elizabethans. The contribution of the dictionary to the English language is three-fold.

(a) It conferred stability on the English language.

(b) It standardized the spelling system in English.

(c) It was the first authoritative work on the English language and the first reference material on the language.

In the Preface he outlines his aims and procedures. He states that when he undertook the task of writing his dictionary, he found that the English language was rather disorderly and without any rules. He noted with concern the perpetual flow of foreign words into the language. He also expressed his concern that the English and Anglicised words were changing their meanings due to the whims and fancies of people. All these factors had led him to straighten things in his dictionary. His chief interest in his dictionary was to preserve the purity and ascertain the meaning of the English idiom. From this point of view, his dictionary is a major contribution to the development of the English language.

The basic features of Dr. Johnson's *Dictionary* have been outlined here:

(a) The definitions are lucid, appropriate and consistent between entries.

(b) He pays special attention to the different senses and meanings of a word.

(c) There is a liberal use of quotations to support a definition. These are generally taken from dead authors so as not to be misled by partialities.

(d) He follows the usage of the sources in arriving at his definitions.

(e) He routinely identified parts of speech of the headwords.

However, he was very selective about the words included in his dictionary. He avoided words that were not in the written form.

Dr. Johnson's contribution to the English language can also be credited to the distinctiveness of the prose style that he developed in his writings. *Johnsonese* is the term that is used to describe his

style. It is a style characterised by too big words and too many of them. It is a style that avoids simple expressions and makes use of heavy pompous words and sentence structures. Here is an example: "*I have missed the enduring elegance of female friendship, and the happy commerce of domestic tenderness*." Moreover, his style is characterised by an excessive use of elaborate and antithetical phrases.

2.5.3 The Contribution of T.S. Eliot

T.S. Eliot (1888 – 1965) was the most influential poet of the twentieth century writing in English. His influence can be seen in his poetical and dramatic works besides his critical prose works wherein he experimented with the use of language to make it a powerful medium of literary expression. His poetry for example, comes to life by its use of words and images. His style is chiefly identified in the words and images that he chooses, and in the way he puts them together. He even coins words to suit his ideas. One of the words that he had coined by following the rule of word-formation that permits the prefixing of fore- to a verb to convey the sense of beforehand as pointed out by G.N.Leech is the word "foresuffer" in *The Waste Land:* "*And I Tiresias have foresuffered all".* His experimentation in the use of words had led him to mix words belonging to different fields, e.g., poetic words with journalistic phraseology for literary effect as in "The nymphs are departed".

The images that he uses are simple images such as similes and metaphors, including symbols, which are single objects. In "The Love Song of J. Alfred Prufrock", the simile of the evening in terms of a 'patient etherised upon a table' strikes us as a novelty. Likewise, the fog described with the metaphor of a cat is also interesting in its newness. In Eliot's hand, common words like an evening or fog are charged with a special meaning because of their contexts but more so because of what they are compared with or because of their historical or acquired connotation. Eliot manages to choose his words

in his poetic lines to build up beautiful images such as these:

(a) I have measured out my life with coffee spoons...

(b) When I am pinned and wriggling on the wall...

(c) To spit out all the butt-ends of my days and ways...

(d) I should have been a pair of ragged claws/Scuttling across the floors of silent seas...

All these are arresting images, created by the proper choice of words making the reader to wonder at the comparisons brought out therein. Life is like a series of cups of coffee; each day passing like a smoked cigarette and so on.

Eliot develops a poetic style that is composed of all the characteristics of his poetic use of words and phrases, also called poetic diction. His influence on future poets is his poetic diction and style. He is for the most part direct and conversational. He adopts the language of one educated person talking to another. He drops from time to time into a more fragmented utterance as if he is talking to himself, while at other times he heightens his style to produce a more magical effect on the reader. It would be possible to provide more examples from his poetry to illustrate what he could do with words. He had explored the possibilities of language to its utmost power.

2.5.4 The Contribution of the Bible

The Bible has played a very distinctive role in the development of the English language. This is the single-most book that has been studied and quoted and discussed not only in the Church every Sunday morning but also in educational institutions and homes. Consequently, a great many Biblical phrases have passed into the ordinary language as household words and expressions. These include: *under the sweat of thy brow, washed my hands, cared for none of these things, the rain is over and gone, broken reed, burnt offering, stony ground, it came to pass,* and so on.

In fact, the pre-dominance of the Bible in the social life of the English have proved sufficiently resourceful for the expansion of the English language. The word *helpmate* is an instance of the formation of words under the Biblical influence. The word was originally compound of two words 'help' and 'meet' meaning "appropriate help". Subsequently, 'meet' was confused with 'mate' to mean 'companion' thus coming to indicate 'the friend who helps'.

The word 'scapegoat' came to us from Tyndale's version of the Bible. The word owed its origin to the Jewish annual rite to lay symbolically the sins of the people for the year on a goat and then allowing it to escape into the wilderness.

The Bible had influenced poetic language as well. The -th forms of verbs pertaining to third person singular notably, *knoweth, loveth,hath, doth* etc became popular among poets like Coleridge and Tennyson among others.



CHECK YOUR PROGRESS

Q 4: Answer the following questions briefly

(a) Give four examples of words coined by Shakespeare.

(b) Explain the term Johnsonese.

(c) Give an example of a simile used by T.S.Eliot.

(d) Quote two lines illustrating the influence of the Bible on poetic language.

2.6 AMERICAN ENGLISH

The English language that was brought to America by the colonists from England who settled in the Atlantic seaboard in 1607 was the English of Shakespeare and the seventeenth century authors. During the following century and a half till 1787 when Congress finally approved the Federal Constitution the thirteen colonies comprised four-million English speaking people, most of whom still lived east of the Appalachian Mountains. From the linguistic point of view, this was the first and decisive stage in the history

of the United States English, which by general consent came to be known as American English.

During the period from 1787 to the outbreak of the Civil War in 1861, new states were created west of the Appalachians and the Alleghenies, when the second stage of immigrants came in large numbers from Ireland and Germany to seek homes in the New World. The third stage from the end of the Civil War to the present day was marked ethnographically by the arrival of the Scandinavians and settled for the most part in Minnesota and the Upper Mississippi valley. As the great North American Republic took shape with the attachment of French and Spanish populations and the attachment of the native Red Indians followed by the arrivals of the Chinese and Japanese and the waves of African Blacks numbering over twelve millions, American English stood in jeopardy.

However, American English had been able to completely assimilate these immigrant tongues into its fold so that everyone used the language with a surprising degree of uniformity both in speech and writing across the continent. This had been possible due to the constant mingling of the settlers from one part with the settlers of other parts. Not only were all parts of British Isles represented in their original colonists but as each new state was started, it attracted English speaking colonists from various colonies which had become overcrowded or uncongenial for them. The result was that the English spoken in America attained a great deal of uniformity. The common people of America being much more unsettled than their British counterparts and moving frequently from place to place, their language had remained free from local peculiarities either in accent or phraseology. Nevertheless, with the passage of time, American English (AE) developed certain distinctiveness in vocabulary, spelling, grammar and pronunciation from British English (BE) as we shall see here.

2.6.1 Changes in Vocabulary

When colonists settle in a new country, they find the resources of their language constantly taxed. They have no words for the many new objects around them or the new experiences that

they undergo. Consequently, in a colonial language changes of vocabulary take place almost from the moment the first settlers arrive. Hence, at a first stage of development, American English introduced a large number of words drawn from native sources, from the Native Americans besides from the languages of other settlers, the French, Germans and so on. At the same time, the Americans felt the need to standardise their own American English. No one expressed this attitude more vigorously than Noah Webster (1748-1843) did. A lawyer by profession, he set to develop in 1783, 1784 and 17785, a grammar and a spelling book of American English prior to his great work *An American Dictionary of the English Language* (1828).

Here a few words are given by showing the differences between BE and AE:

BE	**AE**
starter	appetizer
lift	elevator
receptionist (hotel)	desk-clerk
wardrobe	armoire
luggage	baggage
hoarding	billboard
autumn	fall
cupboard	cabinet

2.6.2 Changes in Spelling

Spelling reform is one of the notable characteristics of American English. A leader in this process of reform was Dr. Benjamin Franklin who in 1768 devised *A Scheme for a New Alphabet and a Reformed Mode of Spelling*. He was instrumental in influencing Noah Webster into convincing him of the necessity, advantage and practicability of reforming the mode of British spelling system for American English. Webster was convinced of course as evident from the spelling system that he had adopted for his *American Dictionary* of 1828. The distinctive features of the reforms in spelling

are as follows:

(a) While in British English (BE) some words end in '-our', in American English (AE) these words end with '-or' as in: *colour – color, favour – favor, honour – honor,* etc.

(b) While in a large number of words where BE has two consonant letters, AE makes use of only one as in: *traveller – traveler, waggon – wagon, labeled – labelled* etc.

(c) While in BE many words have an '-e' at the end, in AE that 'e' occurs before the final consonant as in: *centre – center, fibre – fiber, metre — meter* etc.

(d) While in BE a number of words are spelt with a 'c' in them, in AE that 'c' is replaced by 's' as in: *defence – defense, offence – offense, pretence – pretense,* etc.

(e) In many cases the spelling of AE is closer to its pronunciation unlike as in BE as in: *axe – ax, plough – plow, tyre – tire,* etc.

2.6.3 Changes in Grammar

The grammar of BE and AE is very similar. There are a few differences but not many and most of them are minor points.

(a) Verbs

BE: I've just met an old friend.

AE: I just met an old friend.

BE: Have you got enough money?

AE: Do you have enough money?

BE: You are going to meet me, aren't you?

AE: You are going to meet me, right?

(b) Determiners and nouns

BE: He plays the piano.

AE: He plays piano.

BE: I'll come the day after tomorrow.

AE: I'll come day after tomorrow.

BE: I bought half a dozen eggs.

AE: I bought half dozen eggs.

(c) Pronouns:

BE: One must do one's duty.

AE: One must do his duty.

2.6.4 Changes in Pronunciation

(a) In BE, the vowel sound 'a' in words like *dance, fast, last, past,* etc are pronounced like the verb in *cart, heart, start* etc. But in AE, the vowel is pronounced like the verb in words like *man, than, ran*.

(b) In BE the 'h' after 'w' as in *wheel, wheat, what , when* etc is not pronounces; but in AE it is pronounced.

(c) In BE the 'r' is not pronounced before a consonant; but in AE it is pronounced.



CHECK YOUR PROGRESS

Q 4: Answer the following questions.

(a) Find out the American English equivalents of the following British English words: biscuit, full stop, railway, pavement, petrol.

(b) Give the American English spelling of these British English words: catalogue, jeweller, litre, humour, theatre.



2.7 LET US SUM UP

We began this unit with the Renaissance which has been taken as the point of departure of Middle English period to usher in a period of rapid growth and development of ideas, literary forms and styles. We stressed upon the print revolution in England that began roughly in 1500 as the starting point of the Renaissance. Along with the Reformation that followed, the Renaissance has been seen as the key-factor in the transition of the language from its Middle English status to its Modern English status. We

noted that a distinctive feature of the Renaissance is the development of a large number of vocabulary items that has its sources in Latin, Greek, French, Spanish, Italian and a variety of other sources. Next, we considered a few of the distinctive ways by which words change their meaning notably through the process of generalization, specialization, extension or transference of meaning and a few other processes. Then we moved on to the contributions eminent writers to the English language and literature notably Geoffrey Chaucer, Edmund Spenser, William Shakespeare, John Milton, Dr Samuel Johnson, Matthew Arnold and T. S. Eliot. Lastly, we moved on to the distinctive features of American English by tracing its development in America and presenting its contrast with British English at the levels of spelling, pronunciation, vocabulary and grammar.



2.8 FURTHER READING

1) Alexander, Michael. (2009). *A History of English Literature*. London: Palgrave Foundations.
2) Baugh, A. C. & Cable, T. (1993). *A History of the English Language.* (4th Edn.). Rutledge.
3) Crystal, David. (1993). *The Cambridge Encyclopedia of the English Language*. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press.
4) Jesperson, Otto. (1982). *Growth and Structure of the English language.* New Delhi: Oxford University Press.
5) Lyons, John. (1981). *Language and Linguistics*. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press
6) Wood, F. T. (1969). *An Outline History of the English Language*. Macmillan.
7) Wrenn, C. L. (2011). *The English Language*. New Delhi: Vikas Publishing House.



2.9 ANSWERS TO CHECK YOUR PROGRESS (HINTS ONLY)

Ans to Q 1:

(a) The term “Renaissance” is a French word meaning rebirth. But in English literature, the term is used as a period in literary history to refer to the period following the Middle English period.

(b) Chaucer’s *The Canterbury Tales* and Gower’s *Confessio Amantis.*

(c) *Morte D’ Arthur.*

(d) The print revolution happened in English with the setting up of the first printing press in England by William Caxton at Westminster in London in 1370.

Ans to Q 2:

(a) a casket for keeping ornaments made of box wood.

(b) see 2.4.2

(c) see 2.4.3

(d) see 2.4.4

Ans to Q 3:

(a) see 2.5.1

(b) see 2.5.2

(c) (d) Try yourself.

Ans to Q 4:

Try yourself



2.10 POSSIBLE QUESTIONS

Q 1: Give brief answers.

(a) Who was William Caxton?

(b) Who was Tyndale?

(c) What is KJV?

(d) Give the American English term for autumn

Q 2: Write short notes on:

(a) Generalisation

(b) Specialisation

(c) American English spelling

(d) Dr. Johnson's Dictionary

Q 3: Answer the following questions:

(a) Discuss the effect of the Reformation in England.

(b) Discuss the features of the English Renaissance.

(c) Discuss the growth of vocabulary during the Renaissance.

(d) Write a note on the contribution of T.S. Eliot to the development of English.

(e) Trace the process of development of English in America.

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UNIT 3: INTRODUCTION TO LINGUISTICS

UNIT STRUCTURE

3.1 Learning Objectives

3.2 Introduction

3.3 Linguistics as a Scientific Study of Language

3.4 Structure and Systems of Language

- 3.4.1 Synchrony and Diachrony
- 3.4.2 Langue and Parole
- 3.4.3 Syntagmatic and Paradigmatic Relations

3.5 Branches of Linguistics

- 3.5.1 Anthropological Linguistics
- 3.5.2 Applied Linguistics
- 3.5.3 Computation Linguistics
- 3.5.4 Ethno-Linguistics
- 3.5.5 Historical Linguistics
- 3.5.6 Philosophical Linguistics
- 3.5.7 Psycholinguistics
- 3.5.8 Sociolinguistics

3.6 Let us Sum up

3.7 Further Reading

3.8 Answers to Check Your Progress (Hints Only)

3.9 Possible Questions

3.1 LEARNING OBJECTIVES

After going through this unit, you will be able to:

- explain the term ‘linguistics’ as science
- differentiate between human language and animal communication
- explain the concepts of synchrony, diachrony, langue, parole etc.
- explain the concerns of the different branches of linguistics.

3.2 INTRODUCTION

This is your introductory unit on linguistics. When you were looking at the "unit structure", above, you must have noted that the section 3.3 gives a definition of the subject: "Linguistics is a scientific study of language". The definition states that the scope of linguistics is language. Let us begin by asking ourselves the question: what is language?

In a general sense, language is a means of communication. You will find that all living beings have the faculty of communication. Birds, animals and even insects like the bees communicate. But humans are the only living species with the power of speech. Indeed, language is the special gift of human beings, thereby making language specific to human beings and used uniformly by all humans. In order to look at the basic feature of human language, it would be useful to draw a distinction between human language and other forms of communication, especially animal communication from the following points of view:

1. **Duality of Structure:** One of the features of human language is that it is structured at two levels.

   At one level, language makes use of a finite set of sound symbols like /p/, /b/ etc. As individual sounds, none of these symbols convey any meaning. In particular combinations, such as /pen/, we have another level producing a meaning that is different from /pin/. So, at one level, we have different sounds and at another level we have distinct meanings. This duality in one of the basic characteristics of human language; with a limited set of sounds we produce sound combinations that are distinct in meaning.

2. **Creativity or Productivity:** Human language can continually create new expressions and utterances by manipulating their linguistic resources to describe new objects and situations. A gibbon call-system lacks creativity or productivity; gibbons draw all their calls from a fixed stock which is rapidly exhausted and which disallows any possibility of novelty. Likewise, the communication systems of most other forms of life are non-creative and non-productive. The bee-dance is slightly

more productive because it can convey information about direction and distance. But it cannot convey any other message.

3. **Arbitrariness**: One of the features of human language is its arbitrariness in its semantic conventions. The term implies that the relationship between a word and the object it represents is arbitrary. There is no necessary inherent relation between the sound that makes up the word and the object signified by the word. That is why the same object may have different names in different languages. A dog becomes 'kutta' in Hindi, 'kukur' in Assamese, 'chien' in French, 'hund' in German and so on. That this particular word rather than any other is used in each of these languages is an arbitrary decision.
4. **Inter-changeability:** The term implies that humans can both be producers and receivers of messages. The communication system of gibbons and bees have these features, but most other animals do not. Some male birds make calls which are not interchangeable with females in several systems of animal communication.
5. **Cultural Transmission:** Language is a set of conventions that have grown as a result of the common living of a large number of people. Each generation learns this set of conventions from preceding generations. Like all human institutions, languages change and even die. It also implies that languages have to be learned and cannot be transmitted through heredity. Each generation has to learn from adults the particular language of the community.
6. **Displacement:** The term implies that human language can be displaced either in place or time. Thus, it is possible for a person in one country now to make a statement about what had happened to someone from another country and in a time in the past. Language can be used to express real and imagined matters in the past, present or future. It can even be used to talk about language itself. A gibbon's food call results from contacts with food and is made in the presence of food. It can never utter a call about something that it ate in the past. But such features are only possible in human language.

By making these six points, attempt was made to throw some light on

the features of human language and how it differs from animal communication. We shall learn more about language in this unit as it is exclusively a unit on linguistics. We now move on to what constitutes the term 'linguistics'. We shall look at that point in the following sections and subsections.

3.3 LINGUISTICS AS A SCIENTIFIC STUDY OF LANGUAGE

Linguistics has been defined by a number of linguists including Professor David Crystal, as the scientific study of human natural language. This definition contains three key words: scientific, study and language. We shall examine each of these key words to see how they contribute towards formulating a comprehensive character of linguistics.

1. **Scientific:** The word 'scientific' in the present context refers to the fact that the study of language in general and of languages in particular is considered worthy of scholarly attention and that a systematic body of facts and theory is built up around it. Linguistics is considered a science because
   - not unlike other sciences, linguistics explains observed data. The data of linguistics is all natural languages. Linguistics makes a scientific study of the natural languages of the world and formulates theories and laws of language.
   - Again, not unlike a scientific theory, a linguistic theory explains observed data and predicts potential data. These are two goals basic to any scientific theory including linguistics.

   Linguistics is also one of the social sciences considering that the phenomena forming its subject matter are parts of the behaviour of men and women in society, in interaction with their values. From this point of view, linguistics can be called an empirical science as the subject matter is observable with the senses, speech is heard, writing is seen and read.
2. **Study:** The word 'study' in the present context, attains the status of a key-word in the definition of linguistics. The term implies that linguistics

makes a systematic study of all natural languages, living or dead. A dead language can be studied only in its written manifestation while living languages can be studied both in their written and spoken manifestations. Linguistics, not unlike other sciences, employs methods to observe, record and analyse the phenomenon related to its subject matter, namely languages. Like other scientific discipline, linguistics is also dynamic. Viewpoints and theoretical models in the field change even in the fundamental ways from time to time and different aspects come to receive primary focus at different times.

3. **Language :** The term 'language' in the context of the definition focuses upon the concern of linguistics with discovering the range of functions to which language can be put. To communicate our ideas is the most widely recognized function of language. It can also be a medium of emotional expression, a means of social interaction, recording of facts, instrument of thought and so on. It can also be the expression of identity. Linguistics aims at exploring the various ways by which such functions of language are achieved. Moreover linguistics helps in the study of language at the levels of sounds (phonology) word-structure (morphology), sentence-structure (syntax) and meaning (semantics). These are the different levels of language which are the concerns of linguistics.



CHECK YOUR PROGRESS

Q 1: Fill in the blanks with appropriate words:

(a) The term 'structure' in the expression 'duality of structure' refers to structure at the levels of ..... and at the levels of .....

(b) Cultural transmission of language implies that languages have to be learnt and cannot be transmitted through .....

(c) The data of linguistics is .....

(d) Linguistics theory explains both ..... and .....

(e) A dead language can be studied only in its .....

Q 2: Give brief answers:

(a) Why is linguistics called 'empirical science'?

(b) List three functions of language is society

(c) "Hallo! Good morning" — what language function does this word of greeting perform?

3.4 STRUCTURE AND SYSTEMS OF LANGUAGE

The terms *structure* and *systems* of language take us to the works of the eminent Swiss linguist Ferdinand de Saussure (1857-1913) whose work titled *Cours de linguistique generale* (1916) has been likened to a "Copernican revolution" on the subject. The eminence of de Saussure rests primarily in his ideas on language which are discussed in the sub sections that follow.

3.4.1 Synchrony and Diachrony

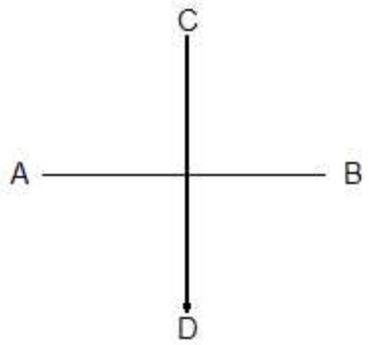
The terms synchrony and diachrony are two fundamental and indispensable dimensions of language study. Synchrony introduces the synchronic or descriptive approach to a language which concerns itself with the language as it exists at a particular point of time. A study of the English of Chaucer today is a synchronic study. As opposed to this, diachrony introduces the diachronic or historical study which concerns itself with the historical development of languages through time. The relationship has been explained with the given diagram.

In the diagram, AB represents a synchronic axis – a language state at some point in time, CD is a diachronic axis of successions –- the historical path that language has travelled. De Saussure believes that it is always necessary to carry out some degree of synchronic work before making a diachronic study; before we can say how a language has changed during the last five or six hundred years of its history. A study of the grammatical, semantic or phonological changes that have taken place in the English language

is essentially a diachronic study of different aspects of changes in the English language that has taken place.

3.4.2 Langue and Parole

In the works of de Saussure, the terms 'langue' and 'parole' are central to his thinking on language. He sees language as the faculty of speech present in all human beings. This faculty is composed of two aspects: langue and parole. The term 'langue' refers to the language system that is possessed by and used by all members of a speech community. It is the abstract knowledge necessary for using language as communication. That is, it is the total set of conventions of the language that the members of a language community share.



On the other hand, the term parole refers to the concrete manifestation of language either through speech or through writing. Any speech event or any kind of writing is basically a concrete manifestation of the different rules and conventions of using the element of the language namely, words, phrases, sentences or different sound patterns. This concrete act of speaking or writing on the part of a person – a dynamic, social activity in a particular time and place is parole.

3.4.3 Syntagmatic and Paradigmatic Relations

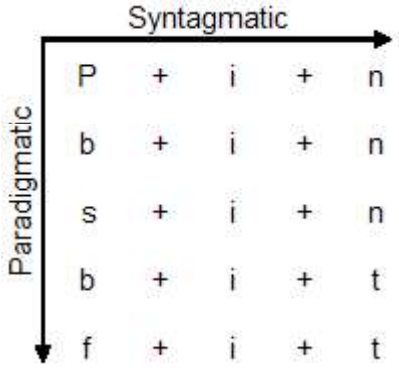
In the works of de Saussure, the terms syntagmatic and paradigmatic associations or relations can be explained by referring

to a sentence on utterance. When we speak, our speech can be considered as a string of constituents in a linear order. The sentence The boy kicked the ball is made up of the following string of constituents called syntagms or syntagmas :

The + boy + kicked + the + ball

The relation between the constituents is generally called syntagmatic relations. We see the elements occurring in a linear order: The + animate noun + action verb + the + inanimate noun. This ordering of the words cannot be changed (we cannot have a sentence like the ball kicked the boy). *Sets of syntagmatically related constituents are often referred to as structure*.

Items can be considered from the point of view of a vertical axis as well. De Saussure has postulated the concept of associative, which he renamed as paradigmatic relationship. Paradigmatic relationship can be established at all levels of analysis e.g. in the selection of /p-/ as opposed to /b-/ , / s-/, / t- / etc. in the context of / -in/ as illustrated in the diagram here.



Similarly, we can think of a paradigmatic relation of “the” as opposed to “a”, “this”, “that” etc. in the sentence The boy broke the window we can also think of “girl” as opposed to boy, and glass as opposed to window. *Classes of paradigmatically related elements are often referred to as language system*.



CHECK YOUR PROGRESS

Q 3: "Cours de Linguistique Generale has been likened to a 'Copernican revolution' on the subject". Discuss the statement.

Q 4: State whether the following statements are true or false

a) Syntagmatic and paradigmatic relation of elements can be applied to phonology, vocabulary and sentence structure. (T/F)

b) Syntagmatic and paradigmatic relation conceives of language as a vast network of interrelated structures. (T/F)

c) A study of the Morphological changes taking place in English since the 15th century is a concern of diachronic studies on the subject. (T/F)

3.5 BRANCHES OF LINGUISTICS

The domain of linguistics is human language in all forms and manifestation. Linguistics seeks a scientific understanding of the place of language in human life. It also seeks ways by which language is organized to fulfil various social needs and perform various social functions. The range being so vast, the field of linguistics as a whole can be divided into several subfields according to the point of view that is adopted or the special emphasis that can be given to one set of phenomena, or assumptions, rather than another. These subfields are seen as different branches of linguistics. Some of the more prominent ones over others have been briefly introduced below.

3.5.1 Anthropological Linguistics

This is a branch of linguistics that bonds with anthropology. The bonds between linguistics, the science of human language, and anthropology, the study of human culture as a whole are obvious. While physical anthropology, one of the fields of anthropology, studies

issues like the nature of racial differences, the inheritance of body traits etc. the other field of anthropology known as cultural anthropology studies the ways humans have devised to cope with their natural settings and social milieu. It studies how bodies of customs are learnt, retained and handed down from one generation to the next. This is the field that linguistics is interested in resulting in distinct field of study known as anthropological linguistics.

The major concern of Anthropological linguistics is to study the relationship between language and culture in a community, eg. its traditions, beliefs and family structure. For example, anthropological linguists have studied the ways in which relationships within the family are expressed in different cultures. “A study of the Kinship Terms in Assamese” can be called an anthropological linguistic study. Again, a study of how people communicate with one another at certain social levels and cultural events eg ceremonies, rituals, and meetings in relation to a community belongs to the purview of anthropological linguistics.

3.5.2 Applied Linguistics

As a branch of linguistics, the primary concern of applied linguistics is the application of linguistic theories, methods and findings for the study of various issues of language. When Pit Corder’s *Introducing Applied Linguistics* appeared in 1973, the term Applied Linguistics was taken as being synonymous with language teaching. He discovered “elements of applied linguistics in all language teaching” (P, 11). However in 1977, Peter Strevens pointed out that the British interpretation of Applied Linguistics can be summarized as a multi-disciplinary approach to the solution of language- based problems. This observation entails that the range of interests of applied linguistics extends far more than second and foreign language teaching. It takes into its purview other issues of language development as well.

A fairly comprehensive range of interests of applied linguistics has been identified by the Seventh World Congress of Applied Linguistics (1984) held at Brussels. The recommendations include the following areas on the subject:

(a) Language problems in Developing Nations: Linguistic consequences of colonialism, national language problems, literacy Programmes etc.

(b) Language and society: Sociolinguistic studies.

(c) Language and mind: Psycholinguistic studies.

(d) Language teaching and learning: First, Second and Foreign language teaching.

(e) Communication and interaction: Discourse analysis, stylistics, translation, lexicography etc.

(f) Logico-linguistics : Logic and linguistic studies. Applied linguistics thus, reaches out to pedagogy, psychology, philosophy of language, technology, literature, rhetoric and sociology.

3.5.3 Computation Linguistics

It is a branch of linguistics which advocates for the use of mathematical techniques often with the aid of a computer. Computational linguistics includes the analysis of language data in order to establish the order in which learners acquire various grammatical rules or the frequency of occurrence of some particular item. It clearly correlates with the application of statistics in linguistics called applied statistics or statistical linguistics which studies the application of statistical techniques in linguistic theory and description. Computation linguistics has made rich contributions in applied linguistic research in areas like testing of bilingual syntax measure of L2 learners, speech synthesis and speech recognition, automatic translation and a host of other areas.

3.5.4 Ethno-Linguistics

It is a branch of linguistics that studies language in relation to the investigation of ethnic types and behaviour. In fact, it can be referred to as the specific study of the inter-disciplinary links, both theoretical and practical, between anthropology and linguistics. The inter-disciplinary links between them can be very strong when the primitive people whose language or culture is under investigation are fairly remote from the well-trodden path of European civilization and European influence. One of the concerns of ethno-linguistics is to make a scientific study of varieties of language which can signal ethnic identity in immigrant groups. As an example, we can refer to the studies making contrast between the speech of black and white Americans. Ethno-linguistics has discovered that there is no striking linguistic variation between the black and white Americans as it is perfectly possible for black speakers to 'sound' white, and vice versa depending upon educational, social and regional factors. Indeed, ethno-linguistics is an interesting field of language studies of various ethnic groups. The term 'ethnography of communication' is often used by sociolinguists to refer to the study of language use in conversation in order to discover the extra-linguistic variables made use of in communication.

3.5.5 Historical Linguistics

It is a branch of linguistics whose concern is the study of development of languages over a span of time. It is also known as diachronic linguistics. Its major concerns include the changes taking place in languages– the how, why and when of language change over a period of time. By comparing earlier and later forms of language, and by comparing different languages historical linguists have shown that certain languages are related to the Indo-European Languages. It has also been possible to reconstruct forms which are believed to have occurred in a particular language before written

records were available.

Much of the works on historical linguistics in the context of language change was done in the greater part of the 19th century, when linguistic scholarship used the comparative method to establish the facts of language change. One of the notable findings on sound change by the application of the comparative method was brought about by Grimm in 1822. Grimm noted that where a word in Sanskrit, Latin or Greek began with [p], the Germanic language usually used [f], as in

Latin – pater English – father

Latin – piscis English – fish

He had noted nine sets of correspondences which fall into a clear phonetic pattern. From this phenomenon of consonant change, these historical linguists have been able to deduce that the Germanic languages had diverged from the Indo-European groups of languages in a regular way. Indeed historical linguistics has been able to make an elaborate construction of different language families operating in the world today by adapting the comparative method.

3.5.6 Philosophical Linguistics

This is a branch of linguistics which studies on the one hand, the role of language in relation to the understanding and elucidation of philosophical concepts, and on the other hand, the philosophical status of linguistic theories, methods and observations. It is interesting to note that the relation between philosophy and linguistics goes back to the Greeks. The earliest systematic analysis of grammar of Greek was undertaken by philosophers as late as the 5th and subsequent centuries BC through its transmission by Rome, the Middle Ages and the Renaissance to the present day. Philosophical enquiries of language involve exact reasoning and a minute examination of the meaning of certain words, and of the relations between sentences in a chain of reasoning. The traditional Aristotelian syllogism provided the framework for philosophical

linguistics to denote the nature of meaning which is a central concern of semantics. Modern symbolic logic has carried this further and extended its scope.

The Speech Act theory of J. L. Austen and J. R. Searle is now used widely in linguistics to refer to a theory which analyses the role of utterance in relation to the behaviour of speaker and hearer in inter-personal communication. Austen and Searle were philosophical linguistics who in the analysis of what they have called 'illocutionary acts' or 'speech acts' have taken the principle of philosophy as their approach to the study of language in immediate use especially the performative sentence structures like 'I name the baby John' indicating that speech is 'a mode of action' and not always a countersign of thought'.

3.5.7 Psycholinguistics

It is a branch of linguistics that concerns itself with the study on the relation between language and the individual's behaviour and capabilities. There are at least two possible directions of study. One may use language as a means of elucidating psychological theories and processes. This direction entails a study of the learner's behaviour in affective variables like interest and motivation, emotion and learning, learning of skills and conditions of practice: Problem-solving and thinking among others.

At another level psycholinguistics concerns itself with issues relating to the study of language acquisition in children. The term 'acquisition' is used in the context of the process which results in the knowledge of one's native language or the mother-tongue as it is also called. It has been argued by psycholinguists that acquisition is an unconscious process as against the concept of 'learning' which is associated with a language which a learner is exposed to in the formal setting of the school. A second language is learnt systematically at school and the approach is different from the way the child 'acquires' the mother tongue. Psycholinguists are interested

in the different stages of language growth is an infant beginning from the first few days of post-natal life.

Since the sixties, psycholinguistics concerned itself with grammar in its study of child-language. With Noam Chomky's demonstration of the fact that languages are rule-governed systems with the property of productivity, there has been a new direction to child-language acquisition with the balance of opinion shifting in favour of the view that "it is impossible to study the child's developing grammatical competence in isolation from his general cognitive, emotional and social development" (Lyons, 2002 p. 256).

Language acquisition of children at the levels of grammar, phonology, vocabulary and meaning is not the only concern of psycholinguistics. Its other concerns include the study of the human brain vis-a-vis the acquisition / learning of languages. The interest in this direction lies in the fact that the language faculty of a learner is seen to be collaborative with other mental faculties.

3.5.8 Sociolinguistics

A branch of linguistics, as the term suggests, sociolinguistics is a study of all aspects of the relationship between language and society. Thus, it seems that sociolinguistics at certain points may overlap with ethno-linguistics which is the study of the relationship between language and culture. 'Culture' generally presupposes society and society, in turn, depends upon culture. However, sociolinguistics, in spite of its vast range of human society as its field, has identified specific areas of society for its scope by concentrating more on social factors than on others. This specific approach to society has left sociolinguistics to concern itself with issues like

a) varieties of language, speech communities, language and dialect studies, standard language register, code switching, code-mixing and a host of other social factors of language use.

b) language, culture and thought.

c) language-based prejudices, issues like bi-lingualism, multi-lingualism, language planning and language attitudes.

An area of interest of sociolinguistics is register which refers to the situational use of language. What is interesting about register is that it lends major feed-back to the field of language teaching. This point perhaps needs to be elaborated a little. Language defined according to its use in social situations can be discussed in terms of its different levels of discourse: field of discourse, mode of discourse and style of discourse.

The term field of discourse refers to the specific use of language in distinctive fields. Thus we have the field of journalism, the field of law, the field of science and technology, the field of business communication, the field of literature and so on. It is notable that each field makes demands on a specific variety of language. We see that the English used in news reports is different from that used in writing legal briefs, the English used in writing business correspondences is different from literary English and so on. This awareness of different specific uses of English has given us the direction for teaching English for specific purposes.

Similarly, the concept of the mode of discourse has given us the knowledge that the variety of English used in the spoken mode is quite different from the variety used in the written mode. The language of the spoken mode has sharpened our sensitivity towards the development of near authentic spoken English courses for adult L2 learners.

Likewise, the concept of the style of discourse has given us the knowledge of the use of distinct varieties of English in formal, semi-formal and informal situations. We now know that the style of English in a formal piece of communication as in a formal letter is different from the style used in writing a personal letter. Similarly, oral presentation in a formal gathering can differ considerably from informal conversation.

So far we have discussed eight branches of linguistics. There are many more. But in most cases you will discover that there is a great deal of overlapping between concepts. Besides over the years as newer ideas have been emerging, newer branches of linguistics have also been emerging. Take for example, the term "Text Linguistics" which is seen as synonymous with discourse analysis– a field of study that deals with

—how humans use language to communicate in different contexts and situations

—how addresses construct linguistic messages for addresses and how addresses work on linguistic messages to interpret them.

The primary concern of text linguistics / discourse analysis is the traditional concern of descriptive linguistics to give an account of the forms of language used in written and spoken discourse so as to discover linguistic regularities in them by using grammatical, phonological and semantic criteria eg. cohesion, anaphora, inter-sentence connectivity and so on.



CHECK YOUR PROGRESS

Q 5: Two branches of anthropology are mentioned in 3.5.1. What are they? What are their immediate concerns?

Q 6: Explain the major concern of anthropological linguistics.

Q 7: Discuss Pit Corder's view on Applied Linguistics and bring out its difference from the views of Peter Strevens.

Q 8: There is a reference to the concern of Applied Linguistics to National Language Problems in 3.5.2. Discuss what you mean by National Language Problems from the Indian context.

Q 9: Describe a hypothetical case where statistical linguistics helps in arriving at some pedagogical findings.

Q 10: State how Ethno-linguistics and socio-linguistics overlap in their concerns.

Q 11: Discuss the basic concern of historical linguistics.

Q 12: Explain the term syllogism by giving an example. State how syllogism is helpful in linguistics.

Q 13: Give an example of a 'performative sentence'.

Q 14: Give examples of formal, semi-formal and informal styles.



3.6 LET US SUM UP

In this unit, we discussed a number of important issues on human language. They include the following: the ways human language can be different from all other forms of animal communication, the "scientific" dimension of linguistics or Linguistics as a scientific study of language, synchrony and diachrony– their relevance to language study, syntagmatic and paradigmatic relations of language structure and system, langue and parole etc. We also briefly discussed the branches of linguistics in terms of their basic concerns: Anthropological linguistics, Computational linguistics, Computational linguistics, Ethno-linguistics, Historical linguistics, Philosophical linguistics, Psycholinguistics, and Sociolinguistics. We have noted the inter-disciplinary character of these different branches. By taking examples of register from sociolinguistics, we have also seen how the concerns of a linguistic study reach out to diverse fields of study.



3.7 FURTHER READING

1) Crystal, David. (1987). *The Cambridge Encyclopaedia of Language.* Cambridge University Press.

2) ——— (1985). *A First Dictionary of Linguistics and Phonetics.* Cambridge University Press.

3) Hudson, R. A. (1999). *Sociolinguistics*. Cambridge University Press.

4) Lyons, John. (2002). *Language and Linguistics : An Introduction.* Cambridge University Press.

5) Robins, R. H. (1979). *General Linguistics : an Introductory Survey,* Longman.

6) ——— (1979). *A Short History of Linguistics.* Longman.

Verma, S. K. & Krishnaswamy, N. (1999). *Modern Linguistics An Introduction.* Oxford University Press.



3.8 ANSWERS TO CHECK YOUR PROGRESS (HINTS ONLY)

Ans to Q 1:

a) sound symbols distinctiveness in meaning

b) heredity

c) all natural languages

d) the observed data / the prediction of potential date

e) written manifestation

Ans to Q 2:

a) see 2.3 (1) b) see 2.3 (3) c) social interaction

Ans to Q 3: Refer to Copernican revolution as the starting point of modern science and build on that.

Ans to Q 4: a) True b) True c) True

Ans to Q 5 to 14: For the answers read the unit carefully.



3.9 POSSIBLE QUESTIONS

Q 1: Discuss how human language differs from animal communication.

Q 2: Discuss linguistics as a “science”.

Q 3: Write notes on

a) Synchrony and Diachrony

b) Langue and Parole

c) Syntagmatic and Paradigmatic relations

Q 4: Write short notes on:

a) Anthropological Linguistics b) Computational Linguistics

c) Ethno-Linguistics d) Historical Linguistics

e) Philosophical Linguistics

Q 5: Discuss the major concerns of Applied Linguistics

Q 6: Discuss the role of psycholinguistics in child language acquisition

Q 7: Explain the term register. How is the study of register relevant for language teaching?

Q 8: Briefly discuss the term discourse analysis and explain its major concerns.

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UNIT 4: PHONOLOGY AND PHONETICS

UNIT STRUCTURE

4.1 Learning Objectives

4.2 Introduction

4.3 What is Phonology?

- 4.3.1 Phone
- 4.3.2 Phoneme
- 4.3.3 Allophone

4.4 What is Phonetics?

- 4.4.1 Acoustic Phonetics
- 4.4.2 Auditory Phonetics
- 4.4.3 Articulatory Phonetics

4.5 The Speech Sounds: Vowels

- 4.5.1 The Pure Vowels
- 4.5.2 The Diphthongs

4.6 The Speech Sounds: Consonants

- 4.6.1 Plosives
- 4.6.2 Affricates
- 4.6.3 Fricatives
- 4.6.4 Nasals
- 4.6.5 Lateral
- 4.6.6 Frictionless Continuants
- 4.6.7 Semi Vowels

4.7 Word Stress

- 4.7.1 Stress Patterns of English Words
- 4.7.2 Stress in Compound Words
- 4.7.3 Grammatical Function of Stress
- 4.7.4 Accent and Rhythm

4.8 Intonation

4.9 Let us Sum up

4.10 Further Reading

4.11 Answers to Check Your Progress

4.12 Possible Questions

4.1 LEARNING OBJECTIVES

After going through this unit, you will be able to

- understand the concepts of phonetics an phonology
- understand the functions of different speech organs
- identify different vowel and consonant sounds
- Use proper stress, rhythm and intonation in speech

4.2 INTRODUCTION

In this unit we shall look at the ways by which speech sounds are produced or articulated in the vocal tract. We shall also look at the physical properties of the speech sounds in different phonetic environments. The term environment is used here to mean the position in which a particular sound (phoneme) occurs in a word. We shall discover that the physical properties of the speech sounds are affected by the position in which a sound occurs.

While we are concerned with speech sounds of English, it would be useful to clarify that there are a number of varieties of speech sounds of English notably American English, British English, Australian English etc. to name only a few. Even within a variety, for example, British English, there are several sub-varieties notably Scottish English, Yorkshire English and so on. With such a wide variation in English speech in the English speaking world, there is the need for identifying a regionally neutral accent of English. The variety that is often preferred for teaching purposes is what is known as Received Pronunciation (RP).

The reason for selecting RP is not because of the fact that some prestige is attached to this variety over others, but because of the fact that it is regionally neutral. Being regionally neutral, it has intelligibility at an international level of speech. Moreover, most of the standard literatures on phonetics and spoken English make use of the RP variety of English. It is because of this factor, more than any others that for pedagogical purpose RP is the preferred sound system of English.

Our approach to the discussion on the sounds of English would

begin with a close look at the concepts of phonetics and phonology which will constitute the core theme in the sections that follow.

4.3 WHAT IS PHONOLOGY?

We shall consider the concept of phonology in this unit as a level of linguistic organization contrasted with morphology, syntax and semantics. In unit 4, we shall see that the concern of morphology is the study of the structure of words. In unit 5 we shall see that the concern of syntax is the study of the structure of sentences. Likewise, in unit 6 we shall see that the concern of semantics is the study of meaning. In this unit, we shall be concerned with phonology which as you shall see by and by that it is the study of the sound system of language.

The human vocal organs can produce a very wide range of speech sounds. The International Phonetic Association has developed and is progressively modifying a set of sound symbols known as the International Phonetic Alphabet (IPA) symbols to provide a precise and universal means of recording in writing the wide range of speech sounds. No language, however, makes use of all these sounds. In other words, people speaking a particular language use only a limited number of speech sounds. We can therefore say that every language makes its own selection of sounds and organizes them into characteristic patterns. This selection of sounds and their organization constitutes the phonology of the language. Thus, we can say that the aim of phonology is the selection and organization of sounds in a system or pattern.

Within phonology, two branches of study are generally recognized: segmental and supra-segmental phonology. The term segmental refers to any discrete unit that can be identified either physically or auditorily in the stream of speech. The major concepts of segmental phonology are phone, phoneme and allophone. A brief introduction of each of these concepts follow:

4.3.1 Phone

The term 'phone' is used in phonetics and phonology to refer to the discrete segments of sounds in a stream of speech. All the segments of sounds used in each language can be classed into a limited number of phonemes and conversely the vowel and consonant phonemes exhaustively cover all the vowel and consonant sounds that occur in a language. Members of phonemes are often called phones or allophones (see 3.3.3). It is common practice to write phone symbols between square brackets and phoneme symbols or the symbols of a broad transcription between oblique lines. Thus in English [p] is a phone which is a realization of the /p/ phoneme. From the viewpoint of segmental phonology phones are the physical realization of phonemes.

4.3.2 Phoneme

The term 'phoneme' is used in traditional phonological theories to refer to a minimal and distinctive unit in the sound system of a language. In this definition of the phoneme, the key words are i) minimal, ii) distinctive and iii) system.

When we say that a phoneme is minimal, it implies that a phoneme is the smallest unit of sound. A phoneme cannot be segmented any further. As an example, it may be stated that /bi/ 'be' cannot be a single phoneme because it consists of /b/ and /i/. The symbols /b/ and /i/ cannot be broken down any further i.e., cannot be further segmented. Thus /b/ is a minimal unit of sound.

When we say that a phoneme is distinctive' we mean that it contrasts with another phoneme so as to bring out a meaning difference in a word. Two sounds /p/ and /b/ are distinctive or contrastive if they produce a meaning difference when one is substituted for the other. When the initial symbol /p/ in the word pet /pet/ is substituted by /b/ we get the word bet /bet/. Since pet and bet are different words having different meanings, we say that /p/

and /b/ are distinctive or contrastive in English. All the phonemes in the sound system of English, share this feature.

The term system used in the above definition, takes us to a related term structure. We talk about structure and system to describe the sound patterns of a particular language. The concept of structure deals with the syntagmatic relations between units. Take the English word pit. The word consists of one syllable made up of consonant /p/, vowel /I/ and another consonant /t/. The initial consonant /p/ is in syntagmatic relation with the other two units /I/ and /t/. We can substitute other sounds for the initial sound in the word pit and get other words like bit, kit, fit, hit, wit etc. We say that the sounds represented by /pit/ are in paradigmatic relation with the sounds represented by words bit /bit/, kit/kit/ etc. When two words (e.g. pit and hit) differ only in one sound, the pair of words is called a minimal pair.

The term system refers to the fact that phonemes of a language are meaningful only within the system of a language. If we consider the sound system of Assamese, we note that [k] and [k^h] are separate phonemes in that language as the replacement of one sound with another produces a meaning difference. In Assamese কল and খল are two different words. But in English /kæt/ and [k^hæt] are not two different words; [k^h] is merely a realization of the phoneme /k/. This indicates that the concept of the phoneme is applicable within the system of a given language.

4.3.3 Allophone

The phonemes of a language are often referred to as abstract units. These abstract units are realized as phones. The nature of the realization of a phoneme depends to a large extent upon the environment, that is, the position that the phoneme occupies in a word. We can say that depending upon the position the phoneme /p/ can be realized differently. These different realizations of the phoneme are called the allophones of the phoneme. Let us examine

the different realizations of /p/.

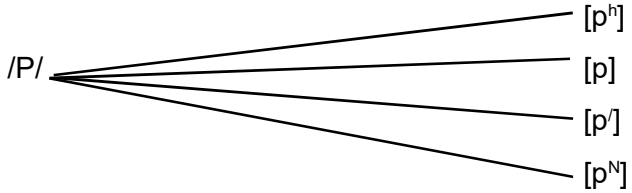
a) When /p/ occurs in the initial position of a word as in pen, it is realized as an aspirated voiceless bi-labial plosive. We use the symbol [p^h] to describe the allophonic variant of /p/ in word initial, stressed position.

b) When /p/ occurs in an accented syllable preceded by /s/ as in spin, the /p/ is an unaspirated, voiceless, bilabial plosive. We use the symbol [p] to describe the allophonic variant of /p/.

c) When /p/ occurs in the final position of a word as in slip, the /p/ has no audible release. We use the symbol [p ˺] to describe the allophonic variant /p/ with no audible release in word final position.

d) When /p/ is immediately followed by /m/ as to topmost, /p/ is realized as a nasally released voiceless bilabial plosive. We use the symbol [p^N] to describe the allophonic variant of /p/ when it is nasally released. Thus topmost can be phonetically transcribed as [$t^hop^Nm\partial ust$].

The above account of the allophonic variants of the phoneme /p/ can be represented as follows:



The diagram shows that /p/ and /p^h/ are not two different phonemes in English. We say that [p^h] is an allophonic variant of /p/ However, in languages like Assamese, Bengali and Hindi, these two sounds are not allophonic variants. They are different phonemes.

Supra-segmental phonology, on the other hand, refers to the prosodic features of speech. Among these features, two of the major features are taken up – (i) stress and rhythm and (ii) intonation which we shall discuss in 3.8 and 3.9 separately.

4.4 WHAT IS PHONETICS ?

Phonetics is the science which studies the characteristics of speech sounds in terms of their production, transmission and reception. It studies the medium of spoken language. Touching upon physiology and physics, phonetics is now a pure science that studies speech processes including the anatomy, neurology and pathology of speech besides the articulation, description, classification, production and perception of speech sounds. The study of phonetics can be divided into three main branches, acoustic, auditory and articulatory phonetics.

4.4.1 Acoustic Phonetics

Acoustic phonetics is the study of the physical properties of speech sounds such as frequency and amplitude in their transmission. Acoustic phonetics analyses the speech waves with the help of instruments. They attempt to describe the physical properties of the stream of sounds what issue forth from the month of speaker. Complex sound waves produced in speech can be analysed into their component frequencies and relative amplitudes. Acoustic analysis has confirmed that speech is not made up of sequence of discrete sounds. The articulatory features nasality, friction and obstruction, can be analysed acoustically.

4.4.2 Auditory Phonetics

Auditory phonetics is the study of how speech sounds are heard and perceived. Hearing refers to what goes on in the ear proper to the sounds that are channeled down the canal of the ear leading to the ear-drum. Hearing is a very intricate process which requires interpreting the auditory sensations which the sound signals create. The sound wave at the ear drum are transmitted to the middle ear behind the ear drum. The middle ear amplifies the sound waves before they pass them on to the inner ear, a completely enclosed gallery with rigid walls and filled with fluid, coiled round itself like a

snail shell and becoming narrower as it does so. When the vibrations are passed to the fluid, they cause a membrane to vibrate activating an auditory nerve that is connected to the brain. What happens when signals from the ear reaches the brain is largely a mystery still. Yet we do perceive sound, we hear high and low pitch, loudness and softness, changing sound qualities and it is this perceptual, psychological aspect that forms the central study of auditory phonology.

4.4.3 Articulatory Phonetics

Articulatory phonetics recognizes that speech is produced by some kind of speech- making approaches inside the human body and that specific sounds may be related to specific movements of the apparatus. Hence, it is the study of the movement of the speech organs in the speech mechanism. This movement is studied in terms of –

- the respiratory system which comprises the lungs along with the muscles of the chest and the wind pipe known as the trachea.
- the phonatory system which comprises the …
- the articulatory system which comprises the tongue, the lower jaw, the lips, the teeth, the teeth ridge, the soft palate and the uvula.

The various organs listed under each system are explained briefly below:

a) **The Lungs:** The lungs which are large sponges enclosed within the rib cage are alternatively filled with air and emptied of it. It is the expiratory lung air, the air that we breathe out, that is the basis for the articulation of most speech sounds, This air-stream is known a pulmonic, egressive air-stream mechanism. The muscles of the chest initiate the production of speech sounds of exerting pressure on the lungs to release the stream of air through the trachea or wind-pipe.

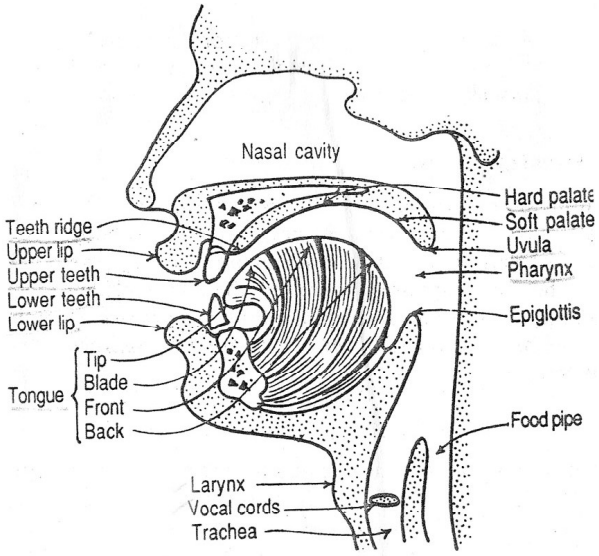


Fig. 1 Organs of speech

b) **The Larynx:** Situated on the top of the trachea, the larynx comprises two vocal cords placed horizontally from front to back. They are joined in the front but can be separated at the back. The opening between them called the glottis, plays an important part in the production of voiceless and voiced sounds. The speech sounds produced with the glottis being open (as shown in Figure 1) are voiceless sounds while those produced with the vocal cords held loosely (as shown in Figure 2) are voiced sounds. The difference between these two types of sounds is that in the production of voiceless sounds like /p/, /t/, /k/ etc. there is no vibration of the vocal cords. On the other hand, in the production of voiced sounds like /b/, /d/, /g/ there is vibration of the vocal cords.

c) **The Tongue:** Any part of the tongue can be raised to any height or be made to touch different parts of the roof of the mouth in order to produce different speech sounds. For example, the tip of the tongue, by touching the upper teeth produces the dental fricative sounds /θ/ as in think, /ð/ as in that; by touching the alveolar ridge, produces the alveolar plosive sounds /t/ and /d/ etc.

d) **The Lower Jaw:** By altering the shape of the mouth by its

upward and downward movement, the lower jaw helps in the production of close, half-close, half open and open vowel sounds.

e) **The Lips:** By being tightly shut or made to assume different shapes, the lips help in the production of bilabial consonants / p / , /b/ and /m/ besides a number of vowel sounds like /i:/, /e/ and /u:/.

f) **The Teeth:** Two type of consonant sounds notably the labio-dental sounds like /f/ as in fan and /v/ as in van and the dental sounds are produced with the help of the teeth.

g) **The Teeth Ridge:** Also called the alveolar ridge, this organ helps in the production of the alveolar plosive sounds /t/ as in ten, /d/ as in den and a few other consonant sounds.

h) **The Hard Palate:** This is the arched bony structure which forms the front part of the roof of the mouth which helps in the production of the palato-alveolar sounds like /ʃ/ as in shoe and /ʒ/ as in measure.

i) **The Soft Palate:** This is the mobile fleshy continuation of the roof of the month culminating in the uvula which can be raised to block the upper part of the pharynx for the production or oral sounds and lowered for the production of nasal sounds. All English sounds except /m/ as in man, /n/ as in net and /ŋ/ as in king are oral sounds. (The uvula is not discussed here because in the sound system of English there are no uvular sounds)

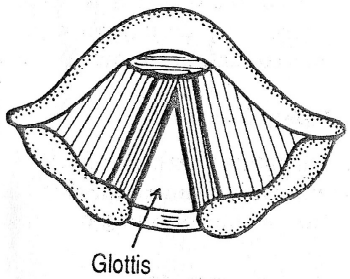


Fig. 2 Vocal cords drawn wide apart

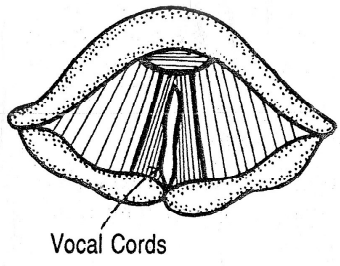


Fig. 3 Vocal cords held loosely together



CHECK YOUR PROGRESS

Q 1: Complete the following statements :

a) The aim of phonology is the _____ and _____ of speech sounds in a system.

b) Phones are the physical realizations of _____.

c) A phoneme is a _____ and _____ unit in the sound system of a language.

d) When two words differ only in one sound, the pair of words is known as a _____.

e) Acoustic phonetics is the study of the _____ of speech sounds.

f) Auditory phonetics is the study of how speech sounds are _____ and _____.

g) Articulatory phonetics is the study of movement of the speech organs in the _____.

h) The vocal cards _____ during the production of voiced sounds.

Q 2: Say whether the following statements are true or false.

a) RP is a regionally neutral accent of English. T/F

b) Intonation is an element of segmental phonology. T/F

c) Pan and pit are minimal pairs. T/F

d) [k] and [k^h] are allophones in Assamese T/F

e) The respiratory system comprises the lungs, the muscles of the chest and the trachea. T/F

f) The phonatory system comprises the uvula. T/F

4.5 THE SPEECH SOUNDS: VOWELS

A vowel is a speech sound during the production of which, the air escapes through the mouth freely and continuously without any audible friction. Vowels are generally described with reference to the following diagram. You make note of the labels used in the diagram.

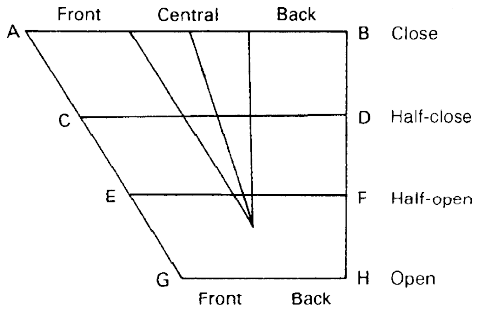


Fig. 15 The vowel diagram

The diagram shows the following three parameters of the tongue in the production of the vowel sounds of English

a) The tongue position in terms of front, central and back which gives us the front vowels, back vowels and central vowels.

b) The height of the tongue which can be described in terms of close, half close, half-open and open to refer to vowels like close vowels, open vowels etc.

c) Position of the lips which helps in the formation of rounded and unrounded vowels.

There are two categories of vowels; the pure vowels or monophthongs numbering 12 and diphthongs or vowel glides numbering 8. Each of these categories is described in the sub-sections that follow:

4.5.1 The Pure Vowels

The following are the pure vowels described in terms of their three-term labels.

1) /i:/ as in feel: While articulating /i:/, the front of the tongue is raised in the direction of the hard palate to an almost close position with the lips spread. /i:/ is a front, close, unrounded vowel sound occurring initially eat, ease), medially (meet, leaf) and finally tea, sea) in a word.

2) /ɪ/ as in fill: While articulating /ɪ/, the centralized front of the tongue is raised in the direction of the hard palate to a position between close and half close with the lips loosely spread. /ɪ/ is a centralized front, unrounded vowel between close and half-close positions. The vowel occurs initially (inn, inch) and

finally (city, lady) in a word.

3) /e/ as in bed: While articulating /e/, the front of the tongue is raised between half-close and half-open positions with the lips loosely spread. /e/ is a front, unrounded vowel between half-close and half-open positions. It occurs initially (any, end) and medially (many, head) in a word.

4) /æ/as in a bad: While articulating /æ/, the front of the tongue is raised just below the half-open position with the lips being neutral. /æ/ is a front, unrounded vowel just below the half open position. The vowel occurs initially (apple, ant) and medially (hand, fan) in a word.

5) /ʌ/ as in hut: While articulating /ʌ/, the centre of the tongue is raised to a position between open and half open. /ʌ/ is a central, a unrounded vowel between open and half open positions. The vowel occurs initially (up, utter) and medially (cup, hut) in a word.

6) /ɑː/ as in heart: While articulating /ɑː/, the back of the tongue is in a fully open position with the lips in a neutral position. /a:/ is a back, open, unrounded vowel occurring initially (ask, aunt) medially (card, part) and finally (far, bar) in a word.

7) /ɒ:/ as in hot: While articulating /ɒ/, the back of the tongue is raised in the direction of the soft palate and it is in a fully open position. /ɒ/ is a back, open, rounded vowel occurring initially (odd, of) and medially (cot, rock) in a word.

8) /ɔː/ as in court: While articulating /ɔː/, the back of the tongue is raised in the direction of the soft palate to a height between half-close and half-open with the lips rounded. /ɔː/ is a back, rounded vowel between half close and half open positions. It occurs initially (all, ought), medially (course, board), and finally (door, bore) in a word.

9) /ʊ/ as in pull: While articulating /ʊ/, the back of the tongue is raised to a position between close and half-close with the lips loosely spread. /ʊ/ is a centralized back vowel between close

and half close positions. It occurs medially (book, look) and finally (to, you) in a word.

10) /u:/ as in pool: While articulating /u:/, the back of the tongue is raised in the direction of the soft palate almost to a close position with the lips closely rounded. /u:/ is a back, close, rounded vowel. It occurs initially (ooze), medially (fool, soon) and finally (two, shoe) in a word.

11) /ɜ:/ as in bird: While articulating /ɛ:/, the centre of the tongue is raised in the direction of the roof of the mouth where the hard and soft palates meet, to a position between half close and half open. /ɛ:/ is a central, unrounded vowel between half close and half open positions. It occurs initially (earn, earth), medially (learn, cure), and finally (fur, sir) in a word.

12) /ə/ as in about : While articulating /ɔ/ in a non-final position, it is a central, unrounded vowel between half close and half open positions. In word final position, it is a central, half open unrounded vowel. It occurs initially (above, again), medially (purpose, circus) and finally (father, mother) in a word.

4.5.2 The Diphthongs

The following are the eight diphthongs:

1) /eɪ/ as in gate (close to এই) : While articulating /eɪ, the glide begins just below the front half-close unrounded position and moves in the direction of the vowel /i/. The vowel occurs;
   - ❍ Initially : eight, aim
   - ❍ Medially : game, late
   - ❍ Finally : say, grey

2) /aɪ/ as in high (close to আই) : While articulating /ɑ/, the glide begins at a point slightly behind the front open position and moves in the direction slightly associated with /ɪ/. The vowel occurs.
   - ❍ Initially : ice, island
   - ❍ Medially : bite, fight

- Finally : try, cry

3) /ɔɪ/ as in toy (close to অয়): While articulating /ɪ/, the glide begins at a point between the back open position and moves in the direction of the position associated with /ɪ/. The vowel occurs
   - Initially : oil, ointment
   - Medially : boil, coil
   - Finally : boy, employ
4) /əʊ/ as in old (close to ঔ) : The glide of this diphthong begins at a central position between half close and half open positions and moves in the direction of / /. The diphthong occurs
   - Initially : own, oath
   - Medially : road, home
   - Finally : foe, hoe
5) /ɑʊ/as in now (close to আও) : The glide of this diphthong begins at a back, open, unrounded position and moves in the direction of /u/au/occurs
   - Initially : owl, hour
   - Medially : crowd, house
   - Finally : cow, how
6) /ɪə/ as in year: The glide of the diphthong begins from a centralized, front unrounded position just above the half-close position to the position associated with /ɔ/. The diphthong occurs.
   - Initially : ear, ere
   - Medially : fierce, nearly
   - Finally : hear, near
7) /ɛə/ as in case : The glide of this diphthong begins at the front, half-open, unrounded position and moves in the direction of /ɔ/. The diphthong occurs
   - initially : airy, airport
   - Medially : fairy, dairy
   - Finally : chair, fair

8) / ʊə/ as in poor : The glide of this diphthong begins at a back, rounded position just above the half-close position and moves in the direction of /ɔ/. The dipthong occurs.

- ❍ Medially : poorly, surely
- ❍ Finally : poor, sure

4.6 THE SPEECH SOUNDS: CONSONANTS

A consonant is a speech sound, the other being the vowel. A consonant can be described by considering.

- The state of the glottis to know whether the sound is voiced or voiceless.
- The position of the soft palate to know whether the sound is oral and nasal.
- The articulation involved to know whether the sound is bilabial, labio-dental etc.
- The nature of the strictures involved to know whether the sound is plosive, affricate etc.

Unlike the vowel, during the production of the consonant sound, the air-stream from the lungs is either completely blocked, partially blocked or where the opening is so narrow that the air escapes with audible friction. For the sake of convenience, the consonants will be discussed under the following heads (a) Plosives, (b) Affricates, (c) Fricatives, (d) Nasals, (e) laterals, f) Frictionless continuants and g) semi-vowels.

4.6.1 Plosives

Plosives are sounds made when a complete closure in the vocal tract is suddenly made when a complete closure in the vocal tract is suddenly released allowing the air to rush out with an explosive sound Plosives can be voiced or voiceless. The following are the categories of the plosives.

i) Bi-labial plosives :

/p/ : voiceless, bi-labial, plosive

e.g. pen, spot, cup

/b/ : voiced, bilabial plosive

e.g. tall, button, cat

ii) Alveolar plosives :

/t/ : voiceless, alveolar plosive

e.g. tall, button, cat

/d/ : voiced alveolar plosive

e.g. dog, pardon, mad

iii) Velar plosives :

/k/ : voiceless, velar, plosive

e.g. cut, income, book

/g/ : voiced, velar, plosive

e.g. girl, begin, leg

4.6.2 Affricates

Affricates are produced when the air pressure behind the complete closure made by a firm contact between the tip and blade of the tongue and the alveolar ridge is gradually released to enable the air to escape with friction. Affricates include:

/t•/ : voiceless, palato-alveolar affricate

e.g. chair, butcher, catch

/d¥/ : voiced, palato – alveodar, affricate

e.g. jam, suggest, badge

4.6.3 Fricatives

Fricatives are sounds made when two speech organs come so close together that the air moving between them produce audible friction. There is no complete closure between the organs. Fricatives include :

i) Labio-dental Fricatives:

/f/ : voiceless, labio-dental fricative

e.g. fan, office, calf

/V/ : voiced, labio-dental fricative

e.g. van, ever, love

ii) Dental Fricatives :

/θ/ : Voiceless, dental fricative

e.g. think, author, both

/ð/ : voiced dental fricative

e.g. them, weather, bother

iii) Alveolar Fricatives :

/s/ : voiceless, alveolar fricative

e.g. sing, post, pass

/z/ : voiced alveolar fricative

e.g. zoo, puzzle, buzz

iv) Palato – alveolar fricatives

/ʃ/ : voiceless, palato-alveolar fricative

e.g. shoe, assure, fish

/ʒ/ : voiced, palato-alveolar, fricative

e.g. pleasure (medial position only)

v) Glottal Fricative

/h/ : voiceless, glottal fricative

e.g. hand, ahead (no final position)

4.6.4 Nasals

Nasals are produced with the soft palate lowered to allow an audible escape of air through the nose. There is also a complete closure at some points in the mouth. Besides, the vocal cords vibrate during the production of these sounds. Nasals include :

i) Bilabial Nasal

/m/ : voiced bilabial, nasal

e.g. man, among, sun

ii) Alveolar Nasal

/n/ : voiced alveolar nasal

e.g. name, many, then

iii) Velar Nasal

/ŋ/ : voiced velar nasal

e.g. singer, ring (no initial)

4.6.5 Lateral

The lateral consonant /l/ is produced when the tip of the tongue is in contact with the teeth ridge with one or both sides of the tongue remaining low to allow the air to pass freely without friction through its sides.

/l/ : voiced, alveolar, lateral

e.g. lake, told, dull

4.6.6 Frictionless Continuant

The frictionless continuant /r/ is produced with the trip of the tongue hold in a position near to but not touching the rear part of the upper teeth ridge. The gap between the tongue and the roof of the mouth is wide enough for the air stream to escape freely without causing any audible friction.

/r/ : voiced post-alveolar frictionless continuant

e.g. run, worry (in word final usually silent)

4.6.7 Semi Vowels

The semi vowels /w/ and /j/ have the effect of vowel glides or diphthongs but are treated along with the consonants because of their function.

/w/ : voiced, labio-velar semi vowel

e.g. west, awake (no final)

/j/ : voiced palatal semi-vowel

e.g. yet, beauty (no final)



CHECK YOUR PROGRESS

Q 3: Give three term labels of the following phonemes :

/p/, /d/, /g/, /tʃ/, /f/, /θ/, /ʃ/, /ŋ/

Q 4: Briefly describe the following vowel phonemes /i:/. /e/, /u/, /u:/, /æ/

4.7 WORD STRESS

'Stress' is a term used in phonology to refer to the degree of force used in producing a syllable. The usual distinction is between stressed and unstressed syllable – the former being more prominent than the latter. The prominence is usually due to an increase in loudness of the stressed syllable, but increase in length and often pitch may constitute to the overall impression of prominence. In general terms, stress is usually associated with emphasis or strength.

As a general rule, if a word has more than one syllable, one of the syllables stands out from the rest. In the word table, the first syllable ta is more prominent than the second syllable ble. Take the word committee. In this word made up of three syllables co-mmi-ttee, the second syllable is stressed. The relative prominence of a syllable is generally due to stress. The most prominent syllable is said to have the primary stress which is marked with a vertical line above in front of the syllable [ˈ]. Any other prominent syllable in a word is marked with a vertical bar below and in front of the syllable. Look at the two examples given in phonemic transcription:

(a) table / ˈteɪbl /; above /ɔˈbʌv/

(b) examination /ɪgˌzæmɪˈneɪʃɔn/

Note the secondary stress, as it is called, below and in front of, zami in examination.

4.7.1 Stress Patterns of English Words

The stress patterns of English words are fixed. You will see that the primary stress is always on a particular syllable for a given word as seen from the following examples:

(1) Stress patterns of disyllabic words: Disyllabic words, that is, words of two syllables can take the stress either at the first syllable or at the second syllable.

(a) Stress on first syllable

ˈable ˈafter

ˈbutter ˈcolour

(b) Stress on second syllable

ad|mit be|tween

ad|vance o|ccur

(2) Stress pattern of tri-syllabic words :

(a) Stress on the first syllable :

|advertise

|character

|innocent

(b) Stress on the second syllable :

a|greement

de|velop

com|panion

(c) Stress on the third syllable

ciga|rette

employ|ee

maga|zine

(3) Stress pattern of words of four syllables :

(a) Stress on the first syllable

|absolutely

|comfortable

|confiscated

(b) Stress on the second syllable

a|bility

com|panion

pho|tography

(c) Stress on the third syllable

acci|dental

circu|lation

democratic

(d) Stress on the fourth syllable

misrepre|sent

misunder|stand

aristo|cratic

From the above discussion, we have noted that the stress pattern is fixed in words. However, in derivations the stress can shift from one syllable to another. Here is an example.

(a) ˈphotograph (primary stress on 1st syllable)

(b) phoˈtographer (primary stress on 2nd syllable)

(c) photoˈgraphic (primary stress on 3rd syllable)

4.7.2 Stress in Compound Words

You have more information on compound words in unit 4, the unit on morphology. These are words as one word with or without a hyphen in between. In compound words, any or both the elements may be stressed.

(a) Stress on the first element :

ˈdining – room

ˈschoolmaster

ˈthunderstorm

(b) Stress on the second element

whenˈever

howˈever

himˈself

(c) Stress on both the elements

ˈafternˈoon

ˈabsentˈminded

ˈold ˈfashional

4.7.3 Grammatical Function of Stress

There are a number of di-syllabic words in English in which the stress pattern depends upon whether the word is used as a noun or as an adjective or a verb. As a noun/ adjective, the first syllable is stressed whereas as a verb, the second syllable is stressed e.g.

Noun / adjective	Verb

ˈconduct con ˈduct

ˈcontrast con ˈtrast

ˈimport im ˈport

ˈobject ob ˈject

ˈperfect per ˈfect

In the above section so far we discussed the stress patterns in individual words. Connected speech in English however, has its own pattern of accent. We shall look at the stress pattern or the accent and rhythm in connected speech in the sub-section (3.7.4) that follows.

4.7.4 Accent and Rhythm

It is useful to note that in a sentence words that are important for meaning — content words like nouns, adjectives, principal verbs and adverbs — are generally accented. Grammatical words like articles, personal and relative pronouns, auxiliaries, prepositions and conjunctions are generally not accented. Look at this sentence:

I bought the book.

In this sentence, the words bought and book are accented but 'I' and 'the are not accented. When a word of more than one syllable is accented in connected speech, the accent falls on the syllable that is normally accented when the words is uttered in isolation. e.g.

The boy re'turned the bicycle.

The word boy is accented because it is a noun, returned because it is a verb and bicycle also because it is a verb. In English, the stressed or accented syllables, which are pronounced with greater force than the other syllables, form a succession of beats coming at regular intervals of time. Spoken English shows a marked contrast between the accented and unaccented syllables. This contrast accounts for its rhythmic patterns.

In order to reproduce the rhythm of speech correctly, it

becomes necessary to use the contracted form or weak forms. If a word is said in isolation or if it is stressed, the strong form is used. If a word is unstressed, it often appears in its weak form. For example, in the sentence Here's an apple, the article an is pronounced in its weak form as [ɔn] or [n]. You may like to try practising the sentences given below and note that there is a regularity of stress or accent in a sentence.

Practice the following sentences with the stress given on the accented syllables marked in the sentences :

(a) He ˈcame to ˈse her.

(b) She ˈbought a ˈbook.

(c) he ˈcan't come just ˈnow.

(d) It was ˈgood to ˈspeak to him.

(e) ˈGive me a ˈnather one.

(f) I promised to ˈcome.

(g) Weˈ went to the ˈmarket

(h) ˈTurn of the ˈlight.

(i) I ˈwant to ˈbuy a ˈshirt.

(j) ˈWhen are you re ˈturning?

4.8 INTONATION

Intonation in supra-segmental phonology refers to the distinction use of patterns of pitch and melody in speech. The patterns of variation of the pitch of the voice are referred to as intonation. When we speak, the pitch of the voice goes on changing. The speaker divides his/her utterance into tone groups. When you make a long utterance, you generally break up the utterance into groups or chunks. You don't speak out a long sentence in one breath rapidly without pauses in between. Each break of an utterance that you make is a tone group.

Each tone group has a nucleus or a tonic syllable. it is on this tonic syllable that a noticeable pitch movement, that is, a change in the pitch of the voice is initiated. If the voice falls, we say we have a falling tone. When we write out a falling tone movement, we use the sloping mark (ˈ) to indicate

a marked change in the pitch of the voice. Read these two sentences …….

(a) She signed the letter. (statement)

(b) She signed the letter? (Yes/No question)

In the statement, the nuclear syllable takes a following tone whereas in yes/no type question, the nuclear syllable takes a rising tone.

Intonation, then plays a very important role in conveying meaning. You must know when to use a falling and when to use a rising tone. The falling tone is used in :

(1) Ordinary statements

(a) I shall see you to \morrow.

(b) He's gone to \Delhi.

(c) I must get my \hair cut.

(2) Questions beginning with a question word

(a) Where did you put my\ bag?

(b) How \far is it?

(c) Which is \yours?

(3) Imperative?

(a) Come and |see me\ soon.

(b) Do it to \morrow.

(c) Take the first turning to the right.

(4) Exclamations

(a) How a| nnoying!

(b) What/ lovely \roses!

(c) How\ tiresome!

The rising tone is one where the pitch rises either from a low level to a high level and is used in.

(I) yes – no type questions :

(a) |Did you /see me| leave the, house?

(b) |Can you, hear?

(c) |Have you| heard the \latest news?

In incomplete utterance

(a) If he| calls a|gain to morrow | |tell him\ I'm out.

(b) I'm not, certain | but I think he's\ left.

(c) ˈAfter, all | you had aˈ longˈ holidayˎ last year.

Apart from the falling tone and the rising tone, the you will be introduced to the fall rise tone or a falling rising tone as it is called. This tone is used for special emphasis. Here are two exchanges

(a) Rina : ˈCan you, possibly come to ˎmorrow?

Asha : Well, I sup pose I might.

(b) Rina : ˈWhat about, Friday?

Asha : Saturday



4.9 LET US SUM UP

We learnt that phonology is a level of linguistic organisation within which two branches of study are generally recognized : segmental and supra-segmental phonology. We learnt concepts like the phone, phoneme, allophone as parts of segmented phonology and concepts like stress, rhythm and intonation as parts of supra-segmental phonology. We learnt that phonetics, the science which studies the characteristic speech sounds in terms of their production, transmission and reception, can be divided into three branches acoustic, auditory and articulatory phonetics. We learnt the functions of different speech organs in the production of speech sounds. We learnt the articulatory features of the vowels and consonants of English



4.10 FURTHER READING

1) Balasubramanian, T. (2011). *A Text book of English Phonetics for Indian Students*. Macmillan.

2) O'Connor, J. D. (1983). *Phonetics*. Penguin.

3) Roach, Peter. (2004). *English Phonetics and Phonology.* Cambridge University Press.

4) Sethi, J & Dhamija, P.V. (1999). *A course in Phonetics and Spoken English.* Prentice Hall of India.

5) Sethi, J. et all. (2004). *A Practical Course in English Pronunciation*. Prentice Hall of India.

6) Standard Allen, W. (1984). *Living English Speech.* Orient Longman.

7) Yule, George. (2004). *The study of Language.* Cambridge.



4.11 ANSWERS TO CHECK YOUR PROGRESS (HINTS ONLY)

Ans to Q 1: (a) selection, organization.

(b) phonemes

(c) minimal, distinctive

(d) minimal pair

(e) physical properties

(f) heard, perceived

(g) speech mechanism

(h) vibrate

Ans to Q 2: (a) True (b) False (c) False (d) False

(e) True (f) False

Ans to Q 3: /p/ voiceless, bilabial, plosive consonant

/d/ voiced, alveolar plosive consonant

/g/ voiced, velar, plosive consonant

/tʃ/ voiceless palato-alveolar affiricate consonant

/ʃ/ voiceless labio-dental fricative consonant

/θ/ voiceless, dental fricative consonant

/ʃ/ voiceless, palato-alveolar fricative consonant

/ŋ/ voiced, velar, nasal consonant

Ans to Q 4: / i / front, close, unrounded vowel

/ e / front, unrounded vowel between half close and half-open positions

/u/ centralized back vowel between close and half close positions

/u:/ back, close, rounded vowel

/ɔ/ central, unrounded vowel between half close and half open position.

/æ/ front unrounded vowel just below the half-open position.



4.12 POSSIBLE QUESTIONS

Q 1: Construct minimal pair drills (at least three pairs each) to contrast the following phonemes

(a) / f / and /V/

(b) / s / and / ʃ /

(c) / p / and / b /

(d) / e / and /æ /

Q 2: How would you distinguish between vowel and consonant sounds?

Q 3: Write note on the diphthongs of English.

Q 4: Write short notes on

(a) Allophone

(b) Affricate

(c) lateral

(d) Semi-vowel

Q 5: Transcribe the following words phonemically

(a) lamb (b) ghost (c) kettle

(d) butter (e) judge (f) ladies

Q 6: Put appropriate stress and rewrite the words

(a) narrate (b) relate (c) kingdom

(d) dental (e) photograph (f) philosophy

Q 7: Draw a section of the human speech mechanism and put appropriate labels.

Q 8: Distinguish between voiced and voiceless sounds.

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UNIT 5: PHONOLOGY AND PHONETICS II

UNIT STRUCTURE

5.1 Learning Objectives

5.2 Introduction

5.3 The Syllable

- 5.3.1 The Syllabic Consonant
- 5.3.2 Consonant Clusters

5.4 Word Stress

- 5.4.1 Stress Patterns of English Words
- 5.4.2 Stress in Compound Words
- 5.4.3 Grammatical Function of Stress

5.5 Accent and Rhythm

5.6 Intonation

5.7 Let us Sum up

5.8 Further Reading

5.9 Answers to Check Your Progress (Hints Only)

5.10 Model Questions

5.1 LEARNING OBJECTIVES

After going through this unit, you will be able to

- discuss the concepts of supra-segmental phonology
- familiarise yourself with the consonant clusters of English sounds
- appreciate the stress patterns of English
- discuss the concepts of accents and rhythm in connected speech
- explain the intonation patterns of English.

5.2 INTRODUCTION

This is the last unit of this Block. In unit 4 of this Block, we discussed the ways by which speech sounds are produced or articulated in the human vocal tract. In 4.3 of that unit we distinguished between segmental and supra-segmental features of speech. Our focus was entirely on the

segmental features of speech sounds which refer to the distinct units or phonemes of the language described in terms of vowel and consonant sounds. In this unit we move on to the supra-segmental features of speech. It is a term used to refer to those features of speech which extend over more than one segment, such as the *syllable, stress, rhythm* and *intonation*. We begin this unit by introducing you to the concept and structure of the syllable as a unit of pronunciation that is larger than a segment of speech sound called phoneme and smaller than a word. We shall note that in the structure of a syllable, the vowel is the nucleus. It is an obligatory element in the structure of the syllable. However, we draw your attention to the concept of syllabic consonants wherein the vowel does not exist as a nucleus and instead, a consonant especially /m/, /n/ and /l/ performs the function of a vowel. We then move on to the notion of consonant cluster which enables us to see how many consonants can co-occur before a vowel nucleus and how many after it.

We next move on to the concept of word stress elaborating the ways by which syllables in a word are stressed by referring to the stress patterns of English words in disyllabic and polysyllabic words. We also refer to the stress patterns of compound words and the grammatical function of stress. We next move on to the concepts of accent and rhythm in sentences by stating that words that are important for meaning, notably the content words (nouns, full verbs, adjectives and adverbs) are generally accented in an utterance. Grammatical words (determiners, pronouns, auxiliaries, prepositions and conjunctions) are generally unstressed in an utterance. We follow up our discussion on accent and rhythm with a modest discussion (considering the limitations of the unit space) on the intonation patterns of English speech. We stress upon the necessity of breaking up a longer utterance into tone groups for better intelligibility of the concerned utterance.

5.3 THE SYLLABLE

The syllable is a unit of pronunciation larger than a segment of speech sound and smaller than a word. A word may be pronounced ‘syllable at a time’ as in *in-for-ma-tion* and a good dictionary will indicate where

these syllabic divisions occur. The first task for us now is to find out how we identify syllables in a word. We have seen that the word 'information' has four syllables. We discover that each syllable has an obligatory vowel (V) segment and one or more consonant (C) segments either before or after the V segment. Sometimes a word/syllable may be made up of only the V element as in the case of the indefinite article 'a' or the pronoun 'I'. Thus,

- as a general case, the V element is the nucleus of a syllable.
- a syllable may consist of more than one C elements before or after the V element
- one or more syllables make up a word.

We can generally say how many syllables there are in a given word by merely making a count of the vowels contained in the word. The word 'pen' has one syllable consisting of a consonant + vowel + consonant or CVC structure. The word 'goldsmith' has two syllables: gold and smith. The word contains the structure CVCC+CCVCC. These examples show that there are as many syllables in a word as there are V elements. By counting the V elements we can say how many syllables a word has because a syllable will have one obligatory V element. But there may be more than one C elements preceding or following the V element. When there are more than one C elements preceding or following the V, we call the consonants as 'consonant cluster'. 'Gold' has a cluster of two consonants following the V while 'smith' has a cluster of two consonants each preceding and following the V element.

However, there may occur occasions when we discover problems in identifying syllable boundaries. This problem arises in respect of spelling where there are double consonants as in account, command etc. when we are unable to decide whether ac-count or a-ccount, com-mand or co-mmand would be the correct syllable boundary. It would be in the fitness of things to identify syllables in such words, after they have been reduced to their phonemic transcription.

account	/ c - kaunt/
command	/kc - ma:nd/
affect	/ c - fekt/

5.3.1 Syllabic Consonants

In our foregoing account we have seen that the V element is the nucleus of a syllable and the C elements occupy a marginal position in the structure. However, there may be syllables where the nuclear position may be occupied by certain consonants wherein these consonants function like vowels. Here are a few examples:

button	/bʌ-tn/
prism	/pri-zm/
bottle	/ba:tl/
sudden	/sʌdn/

When /m/, /n/ and /l/ function as syllabic consonants, they are generally marked, in a slightly narrower transcription, with a diacritic below the consonant.

5.3.2 Consonant Clusters

We have used the term ‘consonant cluster in the discussion of the structure of the syllable. With the help of the symbol V and C, representing the vowel and the consonant element respectively, we can analyse the structure of different kinds of syllables

(a) One element as structure

Word	**Structure**
I	V
ah (h silent)	V
heir (h and r silent)	V

(b) One C elements a final

an	VC
ass	VC
all	VC

(c) Two C element as final

and	VCC
ask	VCC

(d) One C element as initial

no	CV
law	CV
sea	CV

(e) C as initial and final

can	CVC
let	CVC
pen	CVC

(f) Two elements as initial consonant cluster

play	CCV
straw(w silent)	CCV
screw (w silent)	CCV

(g) Three elements as initial consonant cluster

stream	CCCVC
street	CCCVC
spread	CCCVC

(h) Two elements as final consonant cluster

strange	CCCVCC
strand	CCCVCC
screamed	CCCVCC

(i) Three elements as initial and final consonant cluster

strands	CCCVCCC
strengths	CCCVCCC

(j) Four elements as final consonant cluster

Twelfths	CCVCCCC

By looking at these ten types of syllables we find that at the most three consonants can occur at the beginning of a syllable and four at the end. This means that in an English word, there can be zero to three consonants at the beginning and zero to four at the end.

However, there can be consonant clusters at the middle of words as well. For example, in the word “answer”, there is a cluster of two consonants at the middle of the word: V-CC-V. The word

pastry has a cluster of three consonants at the middle of the word: C-V-CCC-V. This is a medial consonant cluster of three consonants.



CHECK YOUR PROGRESS

Q 1: Answer the following questions.

(a) Define the term syllable.

(b) What is a consonant cluster?

(c) Point out the number of syllables in the following words: looking, England, consonants, occur, beginning.

(d) Give two examples each of the following consonant cluster: CC in initial position, CCC in initial position, CCC in final position.

5.4 WORD STRESS

'Stress' is a term used in phonology to refer to the degree of force used in producing a syllable. The usual distinction is between stressed and unstressed syllable – the former being more prominent than the latter. The prominence is usually due to an increase in loudness of the stressed syllable, but increase in length and often pitch may constitute to the overall impression of prominence. In general terms, stress is usually associated with emphasis or strength.

As a general rule, if a word has more than one syllable, one of the syllables stands out from the rest. In the word table, the first syllable ta is more prominent than the second syllable ble. Take the word committee. In this word made up of three syllables co-mmi-ttee, the second syllable is stressed. The relative prominence of a syllable is generally due to stress. The most prominent syllable is said to have the primary stress which is marked with a vertical line above in front of the syllable [|]. Any other prominent syllable in a word is marked with a vertical bar below and in front of the syllable. Look at the two examples given in phonemic transcription:

a) table / 'tebl /; above /|b/

b) examination /ɪgˌzæmɪˈneɪʃ ən/

Note the secondary stress, as it is called, below and in front of, zami in examination.

5.4.1 Stress Patterns of English Words

The stress patterns of English words are fixed. You will see that the primary stress is always on a particular syllable for a given word as seen from the following examples:

1. Stress patterns of disyllabic words: Disyllabic words, that is, words of two syllables can take the stress either at the first syllable or at the second syllable.
   a) Stress on first syllable
      |able |after
      |butter |colour
   b) Stress on second syllable
      ad|mit be|tween
      ad|vance o|ccur
2. Stress pattern of tri-syllabic words :
   a) Stress on the first syllable :
      |advertise
      |character
      |innocent
   b) Stress on the second syllable :
      a|greement
      de|velop
      com|panion
   c) Stress on the third syllable
      ciga|rette
      employ|ee
      maga|zine
3. Stress pattern of words of four syllables :
   a) Stress on the first syllable
      |absolutely

|comfortable

|confiscated

b) Stress on the second syllable

a|bility

com|panion

pho|tography

c) Stress on the third syllable

acci|dental

circu|lation

demo|cratic

d) Stress on the fourth syllable

misrepre|sent

misunder|stand

aristo|cratic

From the above discussion, we have noted that the stress pattern is fixed in words. However, in derivations the stress can shift from one syllable to another. Here is an example.

a) |photograph (primary stress on 1st syllable)

b) pho|tographer (primary stress on 2nd syllable)

c) photo|graphic (primary stress on 3rd syllable)

5.4.2 Stress in Compound Words

You have more information on the term 'compound word' in unit 6, the unit on morphology. Compound words are a combination of two or more words which function as a single word with or without a hyphen in between. In compound words, any or both the elements may be stressed.

a) Stress on the first element:

|dining – room

|schoolmaster

|thunderstorm

b) Stress on the second element

when|ever

how|ever

him|self

c) Stress on both the elements

|after|noon

|absent|minded

|old |fashioned

5.4.3 Grammatical Function of Stress

There are a number of di-syllabic words in English in which the stress pattern depends upon whether the word is used as a noun or as an adjective or a verb. As a noun/ adjective, the first syllable is stressed whereas as a verb, the second syllable is stressed e.g.

Noun / adjective	**Verb**
|conduct	con| duct
|contrast	con| trast
|import	im| port
|object	ob| ject
|perfect	per| fect

In the above section, so far we discussed the stress patterns in individual words. Connected speech in English however, has its own pattern of accent. We shall look at the stress pattern or the accent and rhythm in connected speech in the sub-section (5.5.) that follows.



CHECK YOUR PROGRESS

Q 2: Answer the following questions:

(a) Divide the following words into syllables and put appropriate stress marks:

action, burden, honest, lesson, moment, alone, before, today, begin, beautiful.

(b) Given below is a list of words consisting of two, three, four and five syllables and having varied accentual patterns. Look up your dictionary and group them together according to their accentual patterns:

(i) Words of two syllables: teacher, captain, colour, sleepy, open, window, broken, future, remain, intend, about, defence, exact, select, extend, prepare.

(ii) Words of three syllables: quantity, yesterday, innocent, character, bachelor, selection, important, contribute, repeated, election, librarian, afternoon, entertain, magazine, understand, cigarette, seventeen.

(iii) Words of four syllables or more: innocently, confiscated, democracy, democratic.

5.5 ACCENT AND RHYTHM

We had noted in our earlier discussion on word-stress that in all disyllabic and polysyllabic words, one syllable always stands out from its neighbouring syllable or syllables. In other words, one syllable is always prominent. In much the same way, some words always stand out from the rest in an utterance comprising two or more words. They are more prominent than the others. Their relative prominence is studied under the accentual features of connected speech we are discussing here.

5.5.1 Words Generally Accented

Not all the words in a sentence are accented in speech. It is useful to note that in a sentence the words that are important for meaning namely, content words like *nouns, adjectives, principal verbs* and *adverbs* are generally accented. Grammatical words like *articles, personal* and *relative pronouns, auxiliaries, prepositions* and *conjunctions* are generally not accented. Look at this sentence:

I ‘bought the ‘book.

In this sentence, the words bought and book are accented

but 'I' and 'the' are not accented. When a word of more than one syllable is accented in connected speech, the accent falls on the syllable that is normally accented when the word is uttered in isolation. eg.

The boy re'turned the bicycle.

The word boy is accented because it is a noun, returned because it is a verb and bicycle also because it is a noun. In English, the stressed or accented syllables, which are pronounced with greater force than the other syllables, form a succession of beats coming at regular intervals of time. Spoken English shows a marked contrast between the accented and unaccented syllables. This contrast accounts for its rhythmic patterns.

5.5.2 Weak Forms in English

In order to reproduce the rhythm of speech correctly, it becomes necessary to use the contracted forms or weak forms of words in order to contrast them with the strong forms. We have listed 44 words in English which have a strong and a weak form of pronunciation. There words are generally grammatical words or function words. Let s look at the weak forms of the following words:

	Word	**weak form**	**example**
1.	am	/ m/	I'm a teacher.
2.	are	/ *a*: /	They're going.
3.	is	/z/	He's a doctor.
4.	was	/wɔz/	I was there.
5.	were	/wɔ /	We were late.
6.	do	/dɔ/	Do you play tennis.
7.	does	/dɔ z/	When does he come?
8.	had	/hɔd/	We'd never been to Tura.
9.	has	/hɔz/	He's gone.
10.	have	/hɔv/	You've done that.
11.	can	/kɔn/	They can wait.
12.	could	/kɔd/	How could you say that?

13.	shall	/ ʃl/	We shall need to run.
14.	should	/ʃɔd/	You should be able to do it.
15.	must	/mɔst/	You must try hard.
16.	will	/l/	I'll be late today.
17.	would	/wɔd/	Would you come with me ?
18.	and	/ɔn/	John and Mary are husband and wife.
19.	as	/ ɔz/	Come as soon as possible.
20.	than	/ ðɔn/	Shillong is colder than Guwahati.
21.	that	/ðɔt/	This is the house that Jack built.
22.	but	/bɔt/	But what's the hurry ?
23.	he	/hɪ/	He's my brother.
24.	her	/hɔ/	Her name's Rima.
25.	him	/im/	I gave him a pen.
26.	his	/iz/	This is his car.
27.	me	/mɪ/	Bring me a cup of tea.
28.	she	/ʃɪ/	Where does she live?
29.	them	/ðɔm/	Let them come.
30.	us	/ɔs/	Let's go.
31.	we	/wɪ/	We are happy to be here.
32.	who	/hu/	Who do you want ?
33.	you	/ju/	I'll tell you what had happened.
34.	at	/ɔt/	I'll come at ten.
35.	for	/fɔ/	I waited for you yesterday.
36.	from	/frɔm/	He came from Delhi.
37.	of	/ɔv/	Shoes are made of leather.
38.	to	/tɔ /	I go to school by bus.
39.	a	/ɔ /	I bought a pen.
40.	an	/n/	I bought an umbrella.
41.	the	/ðɔ/	the boy wrote the poem.
42.	some	/sɔm/	I want some money.
43.	been	/bin/	I've been invited.
44.	there	/ðɔ/	There's a man at the gate.

When we utter a word in isolation or stress it, the strong

form is used. In connected speech, we usually use the weak forms of these words. For example, in the sentence Here's an apple, the article 'an' is pronounced in its weak form as [n] or [n]. You may like to try practising the sentences given below and note that there is a regularity of stress or accent in a sentence.

Practise the following sentences with the stress given on the accented syllables marked in the sentences :

(a) He |came to \see her.

(b) She |bought a \book.

(c) he |can't come just \now.

(d) It was |good to \speak to him.

(e) |Give me a \nother one.

(f) I promised to \come.

(g) We| went to the \market

(h) |Turn of the \light.

(i) |want to |buy a \shirt.

(j) |When are you re \turning?

5.6 INTONATION

Intonation refers to the distinct use of patterns of pitch and melody in speech. When we speak English, we generally raise and lower the pitch of the voice forming pitch patterns. We also give a greater degree of loudness and change or speech rhythm to some syllables in our utterance over others. This phenomenon on the patterns of variation of the pitch of the voice is known as intonation.

5.6.1 Formal Properties of Intonation

We shall discuss the intonation of English in relation to both its form and function. Under the form of intonation, we shall take up the nature of pitch variation in the utterance. While speaking, it is important for a speaker to divide his/her utterance into chunks of speech, each chunk uttered at a stretch. a chunk of speech uttered

at a stretch is called a tone group. We can define the concept of the 'tone group' as the basic unit of intonation in a language. A short sentence generally forms a single tone group. While making a long utterance, we generally break up the utterance into groups or chunks. We don't speak out a long sentence in one breath rapidly without pauses in between. Each break of an utterance that we make is a tone group. A few examples are given below to illustrate the tone group. The tone group boundary is shown in slashes.

1. Yes.
2. Here's the book.
3. What do you want?
4. Look/ a terrible thing has happened.
5. If you work hard/ you will pass the examination
6. Even if you run/ you won't catch the bus.
7. You can go up the building/ if you want to.
8. Although it was hard work/ I enjoyed the work/ because it was interesting.
9. You have plenty of time/ but I haven't/ in spite of my retirement.
10. Long years ago/ we made a tryst with destiny/ and now the time comes/ when we shall redeem our pledge/ not wholly or in full measure/ but very substantially.

The first three sentences consist of one tone group each. On the other hand, sentences 4 to 7 consist of two tone groups each. The last three sentences consist of more than two tone groups.

A tone group is usually divided into several parts. The most important part contains the syllable on which a change of pitch begins; this is the nucleus or the tonic syllable. It is on this tonic syllable that a noticeable pitch movement, that is, a change in the pitch of the voice is initiated. If the voice falls, we say we have a falling tone. When we write out a falling tone movement, we use the sloping mark (\ ) to indicate a marked change in the pitch of the voice. Read these two sentences…

a) She signed the letter. (statement)

b) She signed the letter? (Yes/No question)

In the statement, the nuclear syllable takes a following tone whereas in yes/no type question, the nuclear syllable takes a rising tone.

Intonation, then plays a very important role in conveying meaning. You must know when to use a falling and when to use a rising tone. The falling tone is used in :

1. Ordinary statements
   a) I shall see you to \morrow.
   b) He's gone to \Delhi.
   c) I must get my \hair cut.
2. Questions beginning with a question word
   a) Where did you put my\ bag?
   b) How \far is it?
   c) Which is \yours?
3. Imperative?
   a) Come and |see me\ soon.
   b) Do it to \morrow.
   c) Take the first turning to the right.
4. Exclamations
   a) How a| nnoying!
   b) What/ lovely \roses!
   c) How\ tiresome!

The rising tone is one where the pitch rises either from a low level to a high level and is used in.

1. yes – no type questions :
   a) |Did you /see me| leave the/ house?
   b) |Can you/ hear?
   c) |Have you| heard the \latest news?
2. In incomplete utterance
   a) If he| calls a|gain to morrow | |tell him\ I'm out.
   b) I'm not/ certain | but I think he's\ left.
   c) |After/ all | you had a| long| holiday\ last year.

Apart from the falling tone and the rising tone, you will be introduced to the fall rise tone or a falling rising tone as it is called. This tone is used for special emphasis. Here are two exchanges

a) Rina : |Can you/ possibly come to \morrow?
   Asha : Well, I sup pose I might.

b) Rina : |What about/ Friday?
   Asha : Šaturday

5.6.2 Functional properties of Intonation

The meaning of an English utterance, that is, the information it conveys to the listener derives both from its changing sound pattern and the contrastive accentual prominence as well as associated variations in pitch. Intonation makes it easier for a listener to understand what a speaker is trying to convey. The way in which intonation does this is very complex, and many suggestions have been made for ways of isolating different functions. Among the most often proposed are the following.

1. ***Attitudinal function of Intonation***: Intonation enables us to express emotion and attitudes as we speak. For example, the same sentence can be said in different ways which might be labelled *happy, angry, grateful, bored,* and so on. By listening to the intonation pattern, we can form our opinion on the attitude of the speaker. This function of intonation is known as the attitudinal function of intonation.
2. ***Accentual function of Intonation***: The term accentual is derived from accent. When we say that intonation has accentual function, it means that the placement of the stress on the nucleus of the syllable is a matter of intonation. The location of the tonic syllable is determined by the meaning which in turn, helps to produce the effect of prominence on syllables that need to be accented. For example:
   (a) 'Jack likes fish. (The accent on Jack indicates that it is Jack and not John.)

(b) Jack ‘likes fish. (There is no question of not disliking fish.)

(c) Jack likes ‘fish.(Not meat)

3. ***Grammatical function of Intonation***: Intonation also helps us to identify the grammatical meaning of a sentence. For example, the sentence “Those who sold quickly made a profit” can have two meaning depending on the use of the intonation pattern eg,

(a) /‘those who sold quickly/ made a profit/

(b) /’those who sold/ quickly made a profit/

4. ***Discourse function of Intonation***: Further, intonation helps up to identify in a piece of utterance what can be taken as new information and what can be taken as given information. This is done by placing the stress on the most important word in the utterance. A statement like “John went to Delhi” can be the response to several questions.

(a) Who went to Delhi?

(b) Where did John go?

When we put the nucleus on John, we make John the new information. That is the response to the first question. But when we put the nucleus on Delhi, it becomes the new information and hence the response to the second question.



5.7 LET US SUM UP

We began this unit by drawing our attention to unit 4 of this block titled *Phonetics and Phonology - I* wherein we discussed the ways by which speech sounds are produced or articulated in the human vocal tract. We pointed out that in 4.3 of that unit we distinguished between segmental and supra-segmental features of speech though the focus of that unit was entirely on the segmental features of speech leaving out the supra-segmental features, that is, those features of speech which extend over more than one segment, such as syllable stress, rhythm and intonation for this unit.

We began this unit by introducing you to the concept and structure of the syllable as a unit of pronunciation that is larger than a segment of speech sound called phoneme and smaller than a word by referring to the vowel as the nucleus of a syllable meaning thereby that the vowel is an obligatory element in the structure of syllables. In our discussion on the syllables, we referred to the concept of syllabic consonants wherein the vowel does not exist as a nucleus and instead, a consonant especially /m/, /n/ and /l/ performs the function of a vowel. We also discussed the notion of consonant cluster which enables us to see how many consonants can co-occur before a vowel and how many after it. In our next sub-unit on the concept of word stress, we elaborated the ways by which syllables in a word are stressed by referring to the stress patterns of English words in disyllabic and polysyllabic words. We also referred to the stress patterns of compound words and the grammatical function of stress. We next moved on to the concepts of accent and rhythm in sentences by stating that words that are important for meaning, notably the content words (nouns, full verbs, adjectives and adverbs) are generally accented in an utterance. We discussed that grammatical words (determiners, pronouns, auxiliaries, prepositions and conjunctions) are generally unstressed in an utterance. We followed up our discussion on accent and rhythm with an elaborate (considering the limitations of the unit space) discussion on the intonation patterns of English speech by stressing upon both the formal and functional properties of English intonation. We understood the ways of breaking up a longer utterance into tone groups, identifying the nucleus of a syllable and the pitch pattern that is followed in a nucleus for a better intelligibility of the concerned utterance.



5.8 FURTHER READING

1) Balasubramanian, T. (2011). *A Text book of English Phonetics for Indian Students,* Macmillan.

2) O'Connor, J. D. (1983). *Phonetics*. Penguin.

3) Roach, Peter. (2004). *English Phonetics and Phonolog,.* Cambridge

University Press.

4) Sethi, J & Dhamija, P.V. (1999). *A Course in Phonetics and Spoken English,* Prentice Hall of India.

5) Sethi, J. et all. (2004). *A Practical Course in English Pronunciation,* Prentice Hall of India.

6) Standard Allen, W. (1984). *Living English Speech,* Orient Longman.

7) Yule, George. (2004). *The Study of Language,* Cambridge.



5.9 ANSWERS TO CHECK YOUR PROGRESS (HINTS ONLY)

Ans to Q 1:

(a) A syllable is a unit of speech which is often longer than one sound and smaller than a whole word. For example, the word pencil contains the syllables *pen-cil*.

(b) A consonant cluster is a sequence of two or more consonants that may either occur at the initial position of a word (initial cluster) or at the medial position of a word (medial cluster) or at the final position of a word (final cluster).

Initial cluster : clock CC-V-C

Medial cluster: pastry C-V-CCC-V

Final cluster : best C-V-CC

Ans to Q 2: a. ‘ac-tion, ‘ bur-den, ‘ ho-nest, ‘le –sson, ‘mo-ment, a-‘lone, be-‘fore, to-‘day, be-‘gin, ‘beau-ti-ful

b. Try yourself.



5.10 POSSIBLE QUESTIONS

Q 1: Answer the following questions briefly.

(a) Define the term syllable.

(b) Identify the syllables in the word ‘examination’.

(c) Give an example of a three consonant cluster at the end position of a word/syllable.

(d) Give appropriate stress marks in the word ‘photograph’.

Q 2: Answer the questions given below.

(a) Define the term ‘word-stress’ with examples.

(b) Explain ‘syllabic consonant’ with two examples.

(c) Describe the stress pattern of compound words with examples.

(d) Define the grammatical function of stress with examples.

Q 3: Answer the following questions.

(a) Discuss the concept of consonant cluster.

(b) Discuss the ‘weak forms’ of English.

(c) Discuss the concept of ‘tone group’ in English speech.

(d) Discuss the functional properties of English intonation.

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UNIT 6: MORPHOLOGY

UNIT STRUCTURE

6.1 Learning Objectives

6.2 Introduction

6.3 Definition of Morphology

6.4 The Morpheme

- 6.4.1 Free Morphemes
- 6.4.2 Bound Morphemes
- 6.4.3 Morphs and Allomorphs

6.5 Morphological Analysis of Words

- 6.5.1 Lexical Words and Grammatical Words
- 6.5.2 Simple, Complex and Compound Words
- 6.5.3 Affix, Stem and Root

6.6 Inflectional and Derivational Morphology

- 6.6.1 Inflectional Morphology
- 6.6.2 Derivational Morphology

6.7 Word Formation

6.8 Let us Sum up

6.9 Further Reading

6.10 Answers to Check Your Progress (Hints Only)

6.11 Possible Questions

6.1 LEARNING OBJECTIVES

After going through this unit, you will be able to:

- define a morpheme
- distinguish between the morpheme and the word
- identify the structure of words
- distinguish inflectional and derivational morphology
- discuss the different processes of word formation in English.

6.2 INTRODUCTION

This is the first unit of Block 2. In this unit, we shall discuss the concept of morphology. Morphology is a term used in linguistics to refer to the study of forms of words. Hence, in order to understand the concept of morphology, it may be helpful to begin with a more familiar concept — the concept of the *word.* You all know what a word is. It is a unit of expression both in spoken and written language. We consider it be the smallest unit functioning alone in a sentence. Interestingly enough, you will find that there are some words that are made up of a single letter of the alphabet. The word 'a' in This is a book has one letter. However, there are words that are made up of a large number of letters. The word unforgettable has thirteen letters. On the other hand, the word enthusiastically has fourteen letters. If we say, forget is one word, we wonder if we can say that forgettable or unforgetfulness is actually more than one word. It was felt that words could be quite complex in structure and there was a need for a single concept to interrelate such notions as prefix, suffix, root, stem of a word. In order to address these needs, the term 'morpheme' has been made use of. It was taken to be the central concern of morphology. The morpheme, accordingly, was seen as the smallest functioning unit in the composition of words. Thus, this unit helps you to look at morphemes in greater details so that you can have a more comprehensive idea of the concept of morphology.

6.3 DEFINITION OF MORPHOLOGY

Read the following definition of morphology by Professor David Crystal: (1985)

"The branch of Grammar which studies the structure of forms of words, primarily through use of the morpheme construct. It is traditionally distinguished from syntax which deals with the rules governing the combination of words in sentences."

Here is another definition by John Lyons (2002)

"Morphology includes not only inflections but also derivations, it handles both inflections and derivations by means of rules operating upon

the same basic unit — morpheme." (p 103).

Let us look at the definition by George Yule (2009)

"The term which literally means 'the study of forms', was originally used in biology, but since the middle of the 19th century, has also been used to describe the type of investigation that analyses all these basis 'elements' used in a language. What we have been describing as 'elements' in the form of a linguistic message are technically known as morphemes.'' (pp 62-63).

From the above definitions, it is seen that most appropriately morphology is the study of morphemes and their different forms and the way they combine in word-formation. Thereby, morphology is distinguished from syntax, which is concerned with the study of the structure of sentences.

Morphology is generally divided into two fields (Note the definition of Lyons): the study of inflections which is also known as *Inflectional Morphology* and the study of word-formation which is known as *Lexical* or *Derivational Morphology*. We shall look at these two terms in greater details when we look at the section on word-formation in English.

6.4 THE MORPHEME

The term 'morpheme' in morphology refers to the smallest meaningful unit of a language. Thereby, it implies that the word is not the smallest unit of a language in terms of form. A morpheme is described as a minimal and meaningful unit of grammatical analysis.

The key words in the definition are "minimal" and "meaningful". Minimal means the smallest linguistic unit that cannot be broken down any further without destroying the meaning. Moreover, a morpheme has to be meaningful. To illustrate the notions of minimal and meaningful, let us take the word carpet. It is a single morpheme word; it cannot be broken down any further without destroying the meaning of the word. You may like to think that carpet consists of two words car and pet. However, the meaning of carpet has nothing to do with the individual meanings of car and pet. The word carpet is a minimal and meaningful unit in itself.

In this context, you may like to consider the term *phoneme, which* is

the smallest unit in the sound system of a language. A morpheme is meaningful but a phoneme is not so; it is considered to be distinctive, thereby indicating that is has no meaning of its own. It can only bring about a difference in the meaning of a word when we replace one phoneme with another in a word. You will see that the replacement of /p/ with /m/ in the word pen gives the word men. Individually, /p/ and /m/ are abstract concepts having no meaning of their own. However, the replacement of one with the other in a word creates a new word with a difference in meaning.

The concept of the morpheme as minimal and meaningful can be further illustrated by referring to two categories of morphemes namely, free morphemes and bound morphemes. We shall discuss these two terms in the sub-section that follows.

6.4.1 Free Morphemes

The term 'free morpheme' is used in morphology to refer to those morphemes that can stand on their own as independent words. These are single morpheme words like dog, jump, tall etc. These words are made up of single morphemes and cannot be broken down any further. Let us consider the morphological structure of the three words referred to above:

dog : [dʒg] + [z]
jump : [dʒʌmp]
tall : [tɔ:l]

You see that these three words are made up of single morphemes yet; they enjoy the individual status of words. Such types of morphemes are referred to as free morphemes.

6.4.2 Bound Morphemes

The term bound morpheme refers to those morphemes that cannot stand on their own as independent words. They always have to be attached to free morphemes. For example, we consider the morphological structure of the words dogs, jumped and taller. These words consist of the following structures:

dogs: [dZg]

jumped: [d¥∧mp] + [t]

taller: [t]:l] + [C]

The plural ending –s [z], the past tense ending –ed [t] and the comparative degree ending –er [] do not have individual status of words. They have to be attached to free morphemes and hence, they are called bound morphemes.

Thus, a morpheme–, which may be a free morpheme, or a bound morpheme– is invariably minimal and meaningful.

So far, we have looked at the terms free morpheme and bound morpheme. When we discuss the terms morpheme, we have to consider another important term in morphology. It is the term morph. In fact, the term morphology is made up of morph – which means 'form' and '-ology', which means 'the study of'. We shall look at the term in the following sub-section.

6.4.3 Morph and Allomorph

In our discussion on the 'morpheme', we have found that a morpheme is a minimal grammatical unit of a language. We have seen that

- In the word dogs, -s is a bound morpheme; it is meaningful because it carries the notion of the plural form.
- In the word jumped, -ed is a bound morpheme; it is meaningful because it carries the notion of the past tense form.

From the above two examples we learnt that a morpheme is a minimal grammatical unit of a language. On the other hand, a morph is its orthographic or phonological shape. For example, in cats, the initial morph is cat and the final morph is–s; in horse, the initial morph is horse and the final morph is–es. The final morpheme of cats and horses is the same– it is plural morpheme. However, let us consider the morphological structure of these two words.

cats : [kæt] + [s]

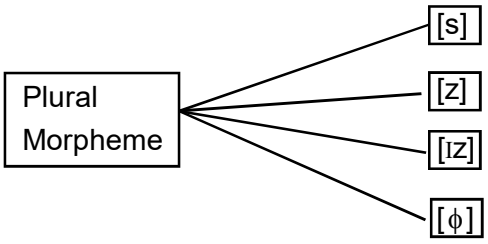
horse: [h]:s] + [z]

Thus, the final morph of cats and horses is not the same. Thus, we can say that a morph is the phonological or the orthographic realization of a phoneme.

From the example of cats and horses, we have seen that a morpheme is not always represented by the same morph; it may be represented by different morphs in different environments. We take four other words cup, boy, rose and sheep to show how morphs have different realizations.

Singular	Plural
cup	cups
boy	boys
rose	roses
sheep	sheep

In the first three words the –s ending has the same meaning; it means 'more than one'. However, in cup it is realized as [s], in boys as [z] and in roses as [iz]. On the other hand, in the plural form, sheep has no morphological realization at all. Let us diagrammatically represent the information taken



From the above diagram, we can say that /s/, /z/ and /z/ are various realized morphs of the plural morpheme. The variously realized morphs of a morpheme are known as allomorphs of the morpheme.

In the case of sheep, we have found that there is no realization at all. We use the symbol // to indicate non-realization. The nouns that do not show any change of form for the plural are said to have zero allomorphs of the plural morpheme as in the case of sheep. // is the symbol of zero morph.



CHECK YOUR PROGRESS

Q 1: Fill in the blanks with the appropriate words:

a) Morphology includes not only ..... but also derivations.

b) Morphology is generally divided into two fields: inflectional morphology and .....

c) The symbol // is called .....

d) ..... refer to those morphemes that cannot stand on their own as independent words.

e) The term ..... means that an element cannot be broken down any further.

f) When two or more lexical words are represented by the same phonological word, we get .....

Q 2: Say whether the following statements are true or false

a) The word carpet consists of two morphemes; car and pet. (T/F)

b) The final morph of cats and horses is the same. (T/F)

c) Words belonging to the categories of articles, pronoun, auxiliaries, conjunctions etc. are called lexemes. (T/F)

d) The word conceived as a structure of phonological sounds is called lexical word. (T/F)

e) The plural morpheme is not always realized as /s/. (T/F)

f) /wd/ is a past tense bound morpheme. (T/F)

6.5 MORPHOLOGICAL ANALYSIS OF WORDS

In section 6.2 of this unit, we described the word as a unit of expression both in spoken and written language. In speech, a word can be a sound or a sequence of sounds; it can also be represented in writing by making use of the phonetic script. The word table can be represented as /teibl /. We can call the word represented thus as phonological word. The word in the general written form makes use of the letters of the alphabet. In the present context, you have seen that the word table is given in small

letters. We can call the word represented thus as orthographic word.

When you examine the relationship between phonological words and orthographic words, you discover a very interesting phenomenon in the case of a few words. Look at the representation below:

In the first case, you have seen that the phonological word /si:n / has two orthographical words. In the second, you have seen that the orthographic word read has two phonological words. The first example is an example of a homophone; the second is an example of a homograph. Read the two entries in the box below.



LET US KNOW

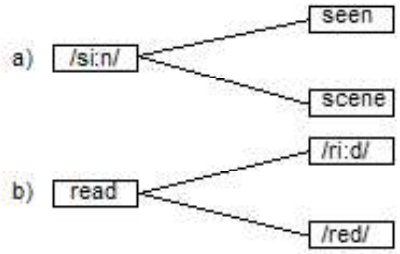
Homograph: words which are written in the same way but which are pronounced differently and which may have different meanings. e.g. Does this road lead to the station? Lead is a heavy metal.

Homophone: Words which sounds alike but are written differently and often have different meanings. e.g. no and know are pronounced /n/ Homophones are sometime called homographs.

6.5.1 Lexical Word & Grammatical Word

Several general classifications of words have been proposed notable among which is the sub-classification that distinguishes between lexis or lexical words and grammatical words.

Lexical words are words, which are viewed in relation to their meaning i.e. in relation to things, qualities, states or actions in the world. Accordingly, these words fall into grammatical categories like noun, verb, adjective and adverb.



Secondly, depending upon its grammatical category, a lexical word may be realized by a set of grammatical forms:

- A noun may be realized as singular, plural and possessive forms e.g. girl, girls, girl's, girls'.
- A verb may be realized as present, past and participle forms e.g. take, takes, took, taken, taking.
- An adjective may be realized as positive, comparative and superlative forms eg. strong, stronger, strongest.
- An adverb may be realized variously in a clause structure as manner, time, place, reason etc.

It is notable that the realization (e.g. Takes, took etc.) structure as manner, time, and place, reason etc. It is the lexical word alone that occurs as the headword in a dictionary entry.

Thirdly, it is important to note that the lexical words are characterized by having semantic content. In order to explain semantic content of lexical words let us take the word table. The phonological word /'teibl/ may be treated as two orthographic words as the basis of meaning expressed in the following two examples:

(i) A book on a table (a piece of furniture)

(ii) A table in a book (display of information in columns)

So 'table' may be regarded as two or more semantic words. However, the form 'table' as a noun takes the plural s in both the meanings stated above.

Lexical words or lexis are variously known as content words, full words etc. and are distinguished from those words that are known as grammatical words, function words or form words.

Grammatical words are words that occur in a grammatical paradigm. For example, the form taking has certain properties which determine its use in a sentence which requires that it must be preceded by a form of 'be' i.e. am, is, are, was, were. These forms of the 'be' verb are grammatical words that do not have a semantic content but are used with other words in order to establish the grammatical framework or the structure in which the lexical words

operate. The different categories of grammatical words include determiners, auxiliaries, pronouns, prepositions etc. These grammatical words are devices for fitting lexical words in an English sentence structure.

6.5.2 Simple, Complex and Compound Words

It has long been recognized that words must be classed into at least two categories — simple and complex. However, the formation of a new category of words by the process of compounding of simple words has resulted in the recognition of another category of words termed as compound words. Some morphologists often refer to a fourth category of words—the compound– complex words where the compounding is affected by making use of complex words. However, for the present, we shall refer to only three categories of words — the simple, complex and compound words.

1. **Simple words:** The term simple words refers to a linguistic unit, which consists of a single free morpheme. A simple word such as book, city, tree etc. seems to be a minimal unit; there seems to be no way to analyse it, or break it down further into meaningful parts. These are words having a single free morpheme.
2. **Complex words:** A complex words refer to words consisting of two parts — the stem and the affix attached to the stem. The morphological structure of a few complex words is given below:
   - books: book + s (one free morpheme + one bound)
   - uneasy: un + easy (one bound + one free)
   - conceive: con + ceive (both bound)
3. **Compound words:** Compound words are linguistic units of two free morphemes or three or more morphemes of which at least two are free morphemes.

(a) Two free morphemes:

i) verb + noun: pickpocket, tell-tale

ii)adjective + noun: blackboard

iii) verb + adverb: farewell

iv) noun + adjective: skyblue

v) noun + noun: goldsmith

(b) Two free & one bound morphemes

i) N + V + ing: bird watching

ii)N + V + or/er tax collector

(c) One free, one bound & one free

V + ing + N: working girl

(d) Three free & one bound

N + N + V + er football player.

By looking of the forms of the compound words, it can be concluded that they are important processes of word formation in English.

6.5.3 Affix, Stem and Root

The terms affix, stem and root are associated with different parts of complex and compound words. The stem or base form is that part of the word to which an inflectional affix is added. The stem of a word may be

a) A simple stem consisting of only one free morpheme. Such a stem is called root.

b) A root and derivational affix e.g. worker (work + er)

c) Two to more roots e.g. work + shop = workshop.

Affixes: Complex words in English are made up of stem and affixes. An affix is a bound morpheme attached to the stem of a word. The affix attached to the front of a stem is called prefix. When it is attached to the end of a stem, it is called a suffix. It is possible to have more than one bound morpheme in a word structure. Look at the morphological structure of the following words:

a) unhappy = un + happy

b) disbelief = dis + belief

c) goodness = good + ness

d) nicely = nice+ ly

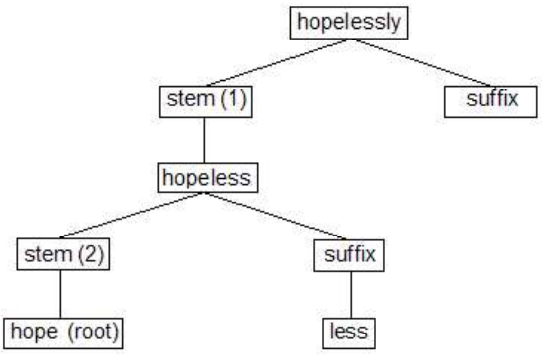
e) unlikely= un + like + ly

f) imitations = imitate + ion + s

g) hopelessly = hope+ less + ly

You will find that the affixes are underlined. In the first two examples the affixes, un and dis are prefixes. In (c) and (d) the affixes ness and ly are suffixes. In (e) you will see both a prefix and a suffix attached to the stem like. In the last two examples you find two suffixes. A stem consisting of only one free morpheme as in like in unlikely is called a root.

The morphological structures of (g) need to be examined more clearly with the help of a tree diagram. That will help us to understand the status of the two bound morphemes suffixed to the stem.



The diagram makes it clear that stem (1) is not the root. It is made up of a free morpheme and a bound morpheme. On the other hand, stem (2) consists of a free morpheme only which cannot be broken down any further and hence it is the root. In this word, both -less and –ly are bound morphemes while hope is the free morpheme.

6.6 INFLECTIONAL AND DERIVATIONAL MORPHOLOGY

Morphology is generally divided into two fields: the study of inflections and the study of word formations. The study of inflections is known as inflectional morphology and the study of word formation is known as lexical or derivational morphology. In this section, we shall look at these two concepts to enable us to distinguish between the two of them.

6.6.1 Inflectional Morphology

Inflectional morphology is concerned with the study of the way in which words vary or inflect in order to express grammatical contrasts in sentences by making use of inflectional affixes. The following are some of the characteristics of inflectional affixes:

(1) Inflectional affixes never change the word class of the stem. The stem book is a noun. The addition of the plural affix s, makes the word books without changing the class of the word.

(2) Inflectional affixes are all suffixed to the stem. They are never prefixed.

(3) Once the inflectional affix is attached to a stem, no other affixes can be attached after the inflectional affix.

Let us now look at ways by which inflectional morphemes operate in modification of the stem of words of different classes.

(a) Inflections of Nouns: in nouns, infections operate at the levels of (i) number and (ii) genitive.

(i) ***Numbers***: Common nouns can have inflections in terms of singular-plural reference, e.g.

cat = cat + plural = cats /kF”ts/

dog = dog + plural = dogs /d›”gz/

horse = horse + plural = horses / ‘h›”siz/

(ii) ***Genitive***: Genitive refers to one of the forms taken by a word usually a noun or a pronoun to express grammatical relationship by means of inflections.

- a tiger's tail (i/e. the tail of a tiger)
- a girls' hostel (i.e. a hostel for girls)
- John's book (i.e. a book of John)

The genitive inflection operates in singular and plural nouns besides proper nouns.

(b) Inflections of Verbs*:* In verbs, inflections operate at the levels of (i) person and number (ii) tense and (iii) aspect and (iv) voice (active-passive)

Person and Number: English verbs undergo modification of form depending upon the person (1st, 2nd and 3rd) and number (singular/ plural)

- Full verb : I take / we take / you take / they take /he/she/ it takes /
- Primary verb 'be' changes the form completely: I am / we are / you are/ He is /They are

Tense: The past form of regular verbs is always the stem and the –ed (past tense morpheme) suffixed to it.

- stop = stop + past tense – stopped
- play = play + past tense = played
- want = want + past tense = wanted

In case of some irregular verbs, it is seen that they form past tense by a change of vowels, e.g.

- eat = eat + past tense = ate
- give = give + past tense = gave
- ring = ring + past tense = rang

In case of certain irregular forms, it is seen that these irregular verbs do not change their form in the past tense.

- cut = cut + past tense = cut
- hit = hit + past tense = hit

Aspect

i. **–ing form** : The – ing form is produced by adding the infection – ing to the base form of the verb irrespective of whether it is a regular verb or are irregular verb.

- play + play + ing = playing
- swim = swim + ing = swimming

ii. ***Participle Form:*** The past participle form of regular verbs is similar to the past tense form; the –ed morpheme is suffixed to the base form in order to make the past participle form

- have worked
- have played
- have waited

The morphological criteria of irregular verbs are similar to the past tense forms.

iii) ***Voice***: The passive voice form is realized by the use of the passive participle, which is produced by adding – ed to the regular verbs and a change of vowels to the irregular verbs generally ending with –en. Thus the passive participle is realized as be+en / be + ed.

- The book was taken
- The smoke was killed

Inflection of Adjectives: Inflection of adjectives takes place at the levels of comparative and superlative degrees.

i) ***Comparative Degree:*** The comparative degree of an adjective is formed by suffixing the bound morpheme – er to the base form

- tall – tall + er = taller
- He is taller than his brother

ii) ***Superlative Degree:*** The superlative degree of an adjective is formed by suffixing the bound morpheme – est to the base form

- tall – taller — tall + est = tallest
- He is the tallest boy in the class.

(iii) ***Irregular Forms***: In certain adjectives the above –er/-est inflections do not operate in forming the comparative and superlative degrees. Instead, there is a complete change in the shape of the word in its various inflated forms e.g.

good — better — best.

This type of irregularity in degrees is known as suppletion.

6.6.2 Derivational Morphology

Derivation is a process of word formation by the use of derivational affixes. The distinction between inflectional and derivational affixes in English is based on a number of factors.

a) Inflectional affixes never change the class of the word. In contrast, there are some derivational affixes that change the class of a word. These affixes are known as *class changing derivational affixes*. However, there are some derivational affixes also that do not change the class of a word. These derivational affixes are known as *class maintaining derivational affixes*.

b) Inflectional and derivational suffixes occur in a certain relative order within words as observed by Akmajian et al (2001). This means that inflectional suffixes follow derivational suffixes. If an inflectional suffix is added to a stem, no further derivational suffixes can be attached to the inflectional suffix.

c) Inflectional affixes are invariably suffixes whereas derivational affixes can be both prefixes and suffixes.

d) The occurrence of inflectional affixes takes place with members of a given class. For example, the plural inflection occurs only with nouns or past tense inflection occurs only with verbs. On the other hand, derivational affixes can occur in more than one word class.

Class Changing Derivational Affix: Derivational affixes like –ly, -ness, -ful, ize etc. change th class of a word. e.g.

a) Kind is an adjective; kindness is a noun. Hence – ness is a class changing derivational affix (CCDA)

b) Kind is an adjective; kindly is an adverb. Hence, -ly is a class changing derivational affix.

c) Beauty is noun; beautiful is adjective. Hence –full is CCDA.

d) Computer is noun; computerize is verb. Hence –ize is CCDA.

Class Maintaining Derivational Affix: Derivational affixes like un, dis-, re-, ir-, -dom, etc. create new words but do not change the class of the word. e.g.

a) Kind is adjective; unkind, which is a different word is also an adjective. Un- is class maintaining derivational affix (CMDA)

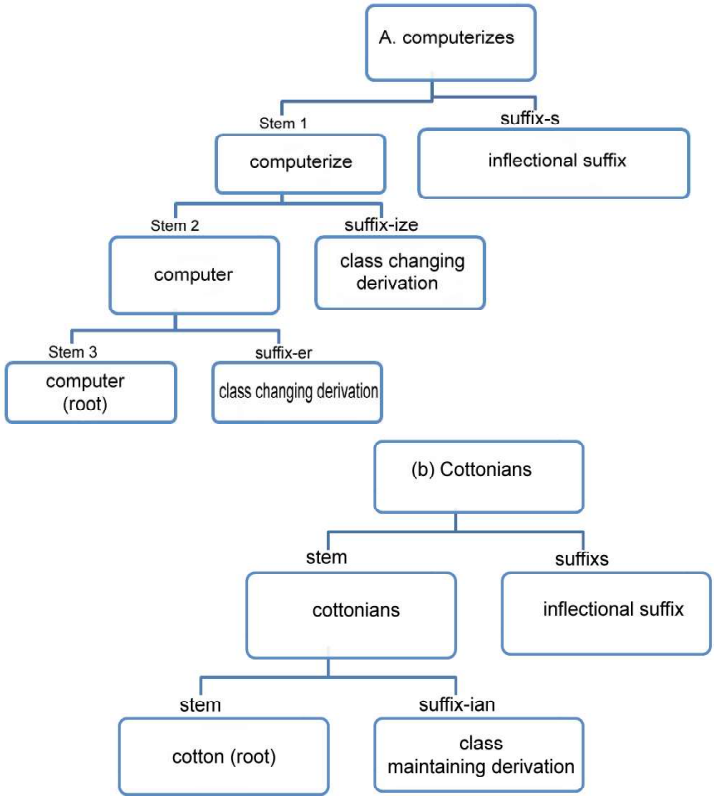
b) Like is a verb; dislike is also a verb. Hence, dis- is a CMDA.

c) Call is a verb; recall is also a verb. Hence, re- is a CMDA.

d) Relevant is an adjective; irrelevant is also an adjective. Hence, ir- is a CMDA

e) King is a noun; Kingdom is also a noun. Hence, dom is CMDA

Below two examples are given to show how we can perform morphological analysis of words with the help of tables drawn from inflectional and derivation morphology.





CHECK YOUR PROGRESS

Q 3: Fill in the blanks:

a) 'Phonological word' contrasts with .....

b) Lexical words are words that are viewed in relation to things, qualities, states and .....

c) Table may be regarded as two or more .....

d) Complex words consist of a stem and .....

e) When a stem cannot be broken down any further, it is called . .....

f) Inflectional affixes never ..... the word class.

g) 's is an example of .....

h) -ness is a class ..... derivational affix.

6.7 WORD FORMATION

The words or lexical items in English as stated in 4.5.1 can be classified into lexical words and grammatical words. While the grammatical words are a closed set, it is invariably the open set class of lexical words that we consider in our task of word formation. That is, the new words that we produce are basically lexical words. The different processes of word-formation are discussed below.

Affixation: Affixation is a very ancient method of word formation, which involves the adding of prefixes and suffixes to a stem or a base form. Affixation of suffixes like –dom, -ship, -ish etc. has given us words like freedom, friendship, clownish etc. Likewise, affixation of prefixes like be – de-, dis- etc. has given us words like belittle, decontrol, disbelief etc.

Conversion: Conversion refers to a process of word formation by converting a word from one class to another class in a sentence. Thus, from the word park which is an open space where cars may be left, is coined the verb to park. Similarly, from the noun pocket we get the verb to pocket. Nouns signifying the principal pats of the body eg head, hand, stomach, back etc. can nearly all be used as verbs. He can head a ball, hand in a letter etc.

Compounding: This point has been discussed at 6.5.2 (c).

Reduplication: It refers to a process of word formation by reduplicating or imitating certain sounds. This process of word formation has given us words like bang, pop, buzz, click, whizz, rumble, mumble, hiss, giggle and so on. The name of the song–bird of spring the cuckoo is most certainly an attempt to reduplicate its call.

Clipping: The process of clipping of parts of a word to create new words has given us a number of new words. Clipping has given words like pop (as in pop music) with the end portion (ular) clipped off. Other examples of new words formed by clipping of end positions include pub from public house, cab from cabriolet, mob from mobile etc. clipping at the beginning of a word has given us bus from omnibus, phone from telephone, wig from periwig etc. In some cases, clipping off portions of the front and the back by retaining only the middle portion, has given us flu from influenza, fridge from refrigerator etc.

Acronyms: Acronyms refer to the coinage of new words by using the initial letter of a series of words eg BBC for British Broadcasting Corporation. AIR from All India Radio, NATO from North Atlantic Treaty Organization and so on. The acronyms are initials-turned – words and are pronounced as if they are distinct words.

Blends: Blends refer to words that are formed by combining a part of one word with a part of another in order to form a new word carrying with it the meaning of both the original words from where parts were taken to form the new word. Examples include:

- motel / n / a hotel especially built for travelling motorists with facilities for parking cars. The word is a blend of motor and hotel.
- brunch / n / a late breakfast, an early lunch or a combination of the two, The word is a blend of breakfast and lunch.
- smog / n/ a mixture of smoke and fog very common in industrial cities. The word reminds one of T.S. Eliot's lines: "Among the smoke and fog of a December afternoon / you have the scene arrange itself…."

  Other examples includes electrocute, Interpol, telecast etc.

Back Formation: It is a process of word formation resulting from a misunderstanding. The principle and the way in which it works can be explained by taking a few examples.

- groveling (adv) in abject manner, on the ground. The terminal –ing was mistaken for the present participle form as a result of which the verb to grovel was coined.
- beggar (n) The word in this form has created the impression that –ar is a suffix attached to the stem beg, thus creating the verb beg.
- Other words of this category include editor, hawker, dancer, writer and so on.



6.8 LET US SUM UP

From this unit we have learnt that Morphology is the study of morphemes and their different forms and the way they combine. Morphology is divided into two fields: inflectional morphology and derivational morphology. Morpheme is the smallest unit of grammatical forms. A morpheme is minimal and meaningful. Morphemes are realized as morphs. The variously realized morphs of a morpheme are the allomorphs of the morpheme. Morphemes can be free and bound. Nouns, verbs, adjectives and adverbs are lexical words. They are distinguished from grammatical words that are used in a sentence structure to establish a grammatical framework. Simple words are single morpheme words and contrast with complex words consisting of a stem and an affix. Compounding is a process of word-formation in English. Inflectional affixes do not change the class of a word and are suffixed to the stem. Inflections take place in nouns, verbs, adjectives, aspect, and voice. Derivation is a process of word formation by the use of derivational affixes. Derivational affixes can be class changing and class maintaining. There are various techniques of word formation in English, affixation, conversion, clipping, reduplication etc. being some of them.



6.9 FURTHER READING

1) Akamaijan, Adrien. et al. (2001). *Linguistics* (5th Edn). Prentice Hall of India. pp 11-64.
2) Lyous, John. (2002). *Language & Linguistics*. Cambridge University Press. Chapter-IV pp 100-135.
3) Richards, et al. (1985). *Longman Dictionary of Applied Linguistics.* Longman.
4) Verma, S. K, & Krishnaswamy N. (1989). *Modern Linguistics*. Oxford University Press. pp 58-79.
5) Wood, F.T (1969). *An Outline History of English Language*. (2nd Edn). Macmillan. Chapter VI pp 109-148.
6) Yule, George. (2006). *The study of Language.* Cambridge pp 62-72.



6.10 ANSWERS TO CHECK YOUR PROGRESS (HINTS ONLY)

Ans to Q 1: a) inflections, b) derivational morphology, c) zero morph, d) Bound morphemes, e) minimal, f) homophones

Ans to Q 2: a) False b) False c) False d) False e) True f) True

Ans to Q 3: a) orthographic word, b) action, c) semantic words, d) affixes, e) root, f) change, g) genitive inflection, h) changing



6.11 POSSIBLE QUESTIONS

Q 1: Write short notes on:

a) allomorph b) lexeme c) affixes

d) compounding e) back formation f) suppletion

Q 2: Write a brief note on derivational affixes. Give five examples of class changing derivational affixes.

Q 3: Discuss five processes of word-formation in English.

Q 4: Morphologically analyse the following words using appropriate taxes of inflectional and derivational morphology

a) hopelessly b) unlikely c) imitations

*** ***** ***

UNIT 7: SYNTAX I

UNIT STRUCTURE

7.1 Learning Objectives

7.2 Introduction

7.3 What is Syntax?

7.4 Different Elements of Syntax

- 7.4.1 Constituents of a Simple Sentence
- 7.4.2 Constituents of a Noun Phrase
- 7.4.3 Constituents of a Verb Phrase
- 7.4.4 Constituents of a Prepositional Phrase
- 7.4.5 Constituents of Adjective and Adverb Phrases

7.5 Let us Sum up

7.6 Further Reading

7.7 Answers to Check Your Progress (Hints Only)

7.8 Possible Questions

7.1 LEARNING OBJECTIVES

After going through this unit, you will be able to:

- explain the concept of syntax with reference to English
- enlist different syntactic constituents in a sentence structure
- identify different kinds of relationships of the constituents in a sentence structure
- discuss the relationship between syntax and semantics.

7.2 INTRODUCTION

In this unit, we shall take up the different constituents of the sentence and look at the ways by which these constituents are structured. We have already discussed the structure of words in our unit on Morphology (Unit 6). Here the attempt will be to see how these constituents like *words* form part of longer constituents like *phrases* and *clauses* and even *sentences*. We shall see how structural linguistics has made an attempt to describe the

structure of sentences by using structuralist tools. The *Immediate Constituent Analysis* or I C Analysis is essentially a structuralist approach to the analysis of sentence structure. Structural linguistics applied what is known as the *discovery procedure* in its attempt to search for a set of operations for the correct description of a language structure. However, with the newer thinking about language as a rule-governed creative process, or a rule-governed activity, there have appeared newer models of sentence analysis. The transformational framework initiated by Noam Chomsky had provided an alternative approach to the study of syntactic structure. We shall take up a discussion on this approach to syntactic structure in a later sub-unit. You will note that we will be making use of different techniques of presenting sentence structures. In most cases, we shall be using the *tree diagram* and in certain cases we shall be making use of the *box diagram* especially in IC analysis.

A tree diagram is a two-dimensional diagram used as a means of displaying the internal *hierarchical structure* of sentences. The *root* of the tree diagram is at the top of the diagram, consisting of the initial symbol 'S'. From the topmost point or *node*, branches descend to the categories that are the constituents of the sentence or 'S' and necessary labels have to be given to different branches as shown in the example below. The term *sub-tree* is used for a sub-section of a tree diagram isolated for the purpose of discussion. For example the section marked NP with its branches ? Det + N is a sub-tree. Points like NP, VP from where branching takes place, are referred to as *branching nodes*.

Box diagrams can also be used to display the hierarchical structure of a string of elements. The internal structure of the sentence *The boy kicked the ball* can be shown in a box diagram as follows:

Both these techniques have been used in this unit to display the structure of a string of elements. The same information can be displayed by using different types of brackets– square, round and curly brackets as in generally done in Mathematics. However, the bracketing technique is not used here and hence we have not described it here. We shall begin our unit with a discussion on the concept of syntax in the next section of the unit.

7.3 WHAT IS SYNTAX?

The term *syntax* is used in linguistics as a level of linguistic description along with *phonology, morphology* and *semantic*. The term is used for the study of the rules governing the way words are combined to form sentences in a language. A syntactic analysis of a language is a description of the sentence structures. It associates with morphology, the study of word-structure to study the ways words are structured and arranged to express relationship of meaning sometimes within and sometimes between sentences. Earlier generation of linguists like Bloomfield (1933) had rightly observed *grammar* as an umbrella term with *morphology* and *syntax* as constituents. (Language, 184). We shall build on that observation in our study of syntax.



CHECK YOUR PROGRESS

Q 1: What is a tree-diagram? What is its purpose?

Q 2: What is a sub-tree diagram? What is its purpose?

Q 3: What is a branching node?

Q 4: What is meant by hierarchy?

Q 5: Draw I C analysis of the following–

a) All the boys.

b) A temple stood on the hill.

c) A very old temple.

d) The boy broke the window.

e) The little girl lost her doll.

Q 6: What is an ultimate constituent?

Q 7: Give two weaknesses of I C analyses.

Q 8: What is I C analysis?

7.4 DIFFERENT ELEMENTS OF SYNTAX

In our attempt to explore the different elements of syntax in this section, we should note how the principles of I C analysis operate in order

to present a description of the basic linguistic units of a sentence structure. It is notable that the system of I C analysis is a tool of structural linguistics for working out a "discovery procedure" which when applied to the data of an unknown language would yield the correct description of the language. The term *discovery procedure* refers to a set of techniques which can be automatically or mechanically applied to a sample of language and which will produce a correct grammatical analysis.

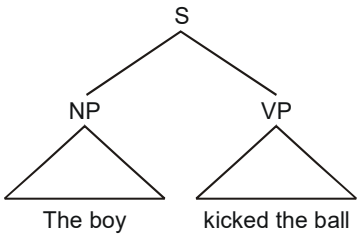
However, it has been found that it is never possible for discovery procedure to identify with certainty all the factors which lead us in the direction of a particular analysis. Besides, newer models of syntactic analysis have been evolved. In this context, the celebrated work of Noam Chomsky titled *Syntactic Structures* (1957) requires special mention. In this book Chomsky present three models of grammar, namely (a) *finite state grammar*, (b) *phrase structure grammar* and (c) *transformational grammar*.

Chomsky observes that the finite state grammar is an extremely simple kind of grammar. It is incapable of accounting for many important processes of sentence formation. As an alternative, he suggests the possibilities of Phrase Structure grammar as a marked improvement over I C analysis as well as Finite State grammar. Phrase Structure (PS) grammar considers the sentence as a linear sequence of elements. The aim is to formulate a set of *P.S. rules* by following certain conventions and notations in formal terms (against functional). Let us now look at the different elements of syntax. For this purpose, we need to see how these elements are structured in the sentence. In other words, we will be looking at the building blocks of sentences. We will also attempt to formulate the P S rules which describe how sentences and their constituents are structured. We shall begin with the simple sentence structure.

7.4.1 Constituents of a Simple Sentence

Let us take the sentence *The boy kicked the ball* once again. We had used this sentence for an I C analysis wherein we had used functional labels. By using formal labels we now say that the sentence

(S) consists of a noun phrase (NP) and a verb phrase (VP). We shall identify the elements of the NP and the VP in due course, but presently let us represent the constituents of the sentence with a tree diagram:



We can formulate a rule to state that a sentence (S) consists of an NP and VP.

$$S \rightarrow NP + VP$$

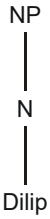
Here, S, NP, VP are called category symbols; the arrow '®' stands for 'consists of' or 'is rewritten

as'. The two triangles under NP and VP indicate that we are not analysing their elements at this stage.

In sub-section 7.4.2, we shall explore the elements of the NP.

7.4.2 Constituents of a Noun Phrase

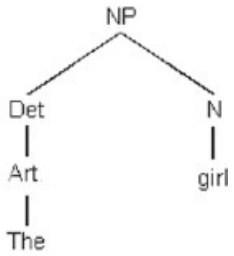
(a) In a sentence structure, the noun phrase (NP) is a kind of construction with a single constituent which could be a noun or a noun equivalent (pronoun, demonstrative, wh-word). This information is diagrammatically represented as follows:



Rule: NP'!N

(b) The NP could be a construction with other elements preceding the N. eg.

(ii)

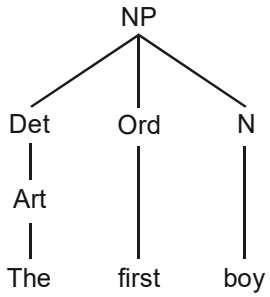


Rule : NP' → Det + Ord + N

Det' → (Art) (Dem) (Poss) (wh–det)

[Det = determiner, Art = article, Dem = demonstrative, Poss = possessive, wh-det = what, which]

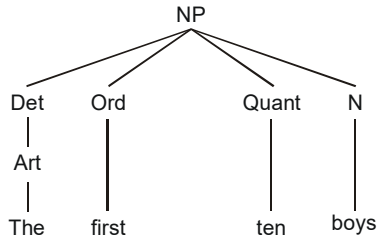
(iii)



Rule : NP' → Det + Ord + N

[Ord = ordinal eg. first, second, last etc.]

(iv)

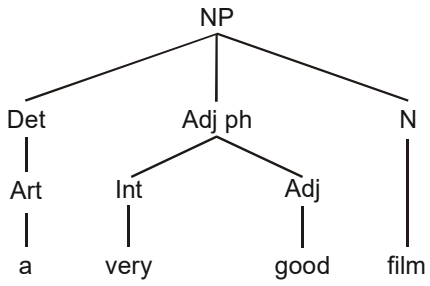


Rule : NP' → Det + Ord + Quan + N

Quan ' → One, two, ten etc.

[Quant = quantifier]

(v)

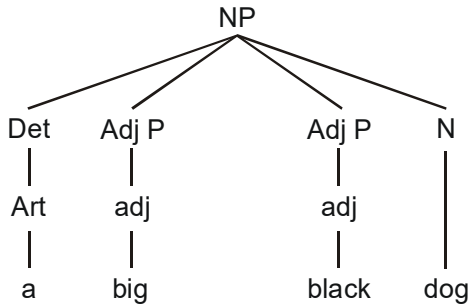


Rule : NP' → Det + Adj ph + N

Adj ph ' → Int + Adj

[Int = Intensifier, Adj = Adjective]

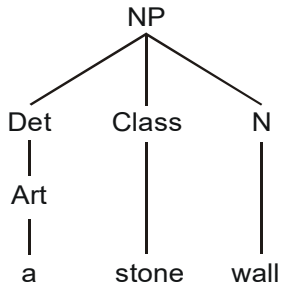
(vi)



Rule : NP' → Art + Class + N

[Class = Classifier]

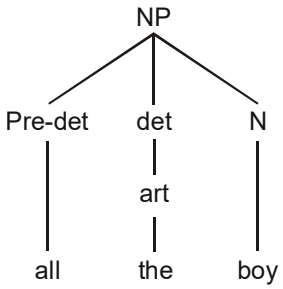
(vii)



Rule : NP' → Art + Class + N

[Class = Classifier]

(viii)



Rule: NP' → Pre det + det + N

Pre det' → pre-determiner (all, half of etc.)

If we frame a rule for the elements in the NP based upon the examples from (i) to (vii), we can say

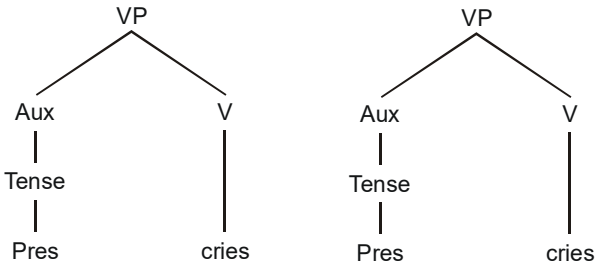
NP' → (Pre-det) + (Det) + (Ord) + (Quen) + (Adj ph) + N

7.4.3 Constituents of a Verb Phrase

In an active, affirmative and declarative English sentence, the verb phrase (VP) immediately follows the NP. The VP may have different constituents, it could be a single constituent like *cried* or *cries* or it may be a group of verbs out of which one is the main verb and the others are auxiliaries. Some forms of the VP are discussed below :

a) In a VP a single constituent like cried/cries in a sentence like *The baby cried/cried*. The constituent is not exactly single. It consists of an auxiliary which in this case is a realization of the tense. e.g.

i) *cries* ii) *cried*

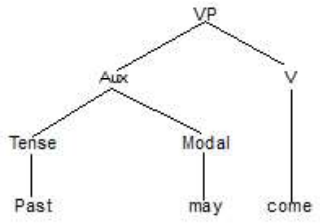


Rule : VP' → Aux + V

Aux' → Tense (pres/past)

b) VP, having a group of verbs out of which one is the main verb :

i) might come

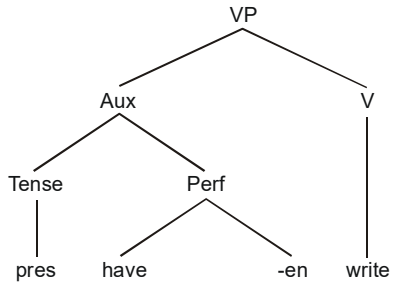


Rule : VP' → Aux +

Aux' → Tense + Model

(Both Tense and model are constituents of the VP)

ii) *have written*

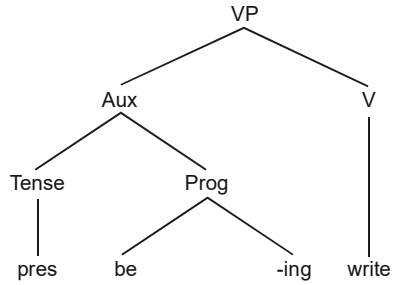


Rule: VP' → Aux + V

Aux' → Tense + Perf

Perf' → have + en

iii) *is writing*

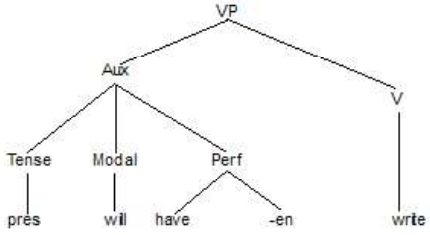


Rule: VP' → Aux + V

Aux' → Tense + Prog

Prog' → be + -ing

iv) *will have written*

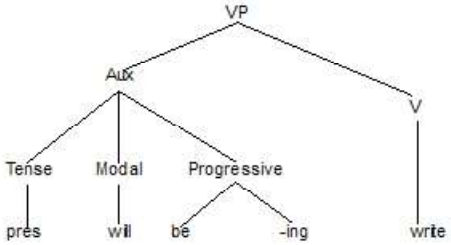


Rule: VP' → Aux + V

Aux' → Tense + Model + Perf

Perf ' → have + -en

v) *will be writing*

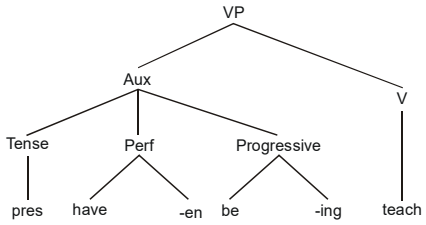


Rule: VP' → Aux + V

Aux ' → Tense + Mod + Prog

Prog ' → be + –ing

vi) *have been teaching*



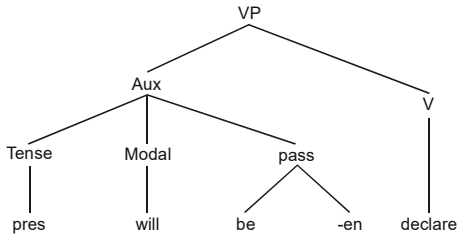
Rule : VP' → Aux + V

Aux ' → Tense + perf + prog

Perf ' → have + –en

Prog ' → be + –ing

vii) *will be declared*



Rule: VP ' → Aux + V

Aux' → Tense + Modal +Pass

pass' → be + –en

From the above discussion, we now know that the basic constituents of the VP include the auxiliary and the main verb eg. VP' → Aux + V. The constituents of the Aux include the following constituents:

Aux' → Tense + (Modal) + (Perf) + (Prog) + (Pass)

The constituents in brackets indicate that they are optional elements while the constituent *Tense* which is not in brackets is the obligatory element in the VP.

7.4.4 Constituents of the Prepositional Phrase

When you look at the basic clause structure of English (also known as the seven basic sentence patterns), you will see how the constituents in each pattern is structured. Look at these patterns :

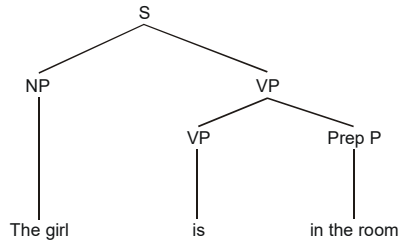
1) Subject + Verb (Intransitive)
2) Subject + Verb + Adverbial
3) Subject + Verb + Object
4) Subject + Verb + Complement
5) Subject + Verb +Object + Adverbial
6) Subject + Verb + Object + Complement
7) Subject + Verb + Object + Object

In the above account, we have used functional labels like subject, object, complement, adverbial. When we look at their forms, we find that the subject and the objects are generally *noun phrases*. The complement can be a *noun phrase* or an *adjective phrase*. On the other hand the *adverbial* in the structure *Subject + Verb + Adverbial* and the structure *Subject + Verb + Object + Adverbial* are invariably prepositional phrases, e.g.

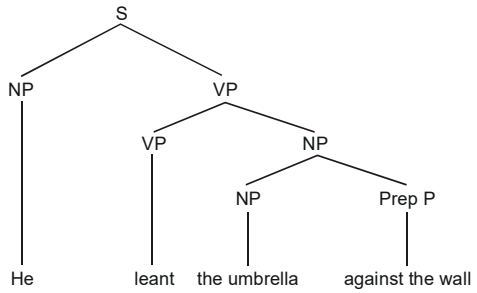
a)	*The girl*	*is*	*in the room*.	
	sub (S)	verb (V)	adverbial (A)	
b)	*He*	*leant*	*the umbrella*	*against the wall*
	S	V	Object	A

Let us look at the constituents with the help of a tree diagram:

a) *The girl is in the room*

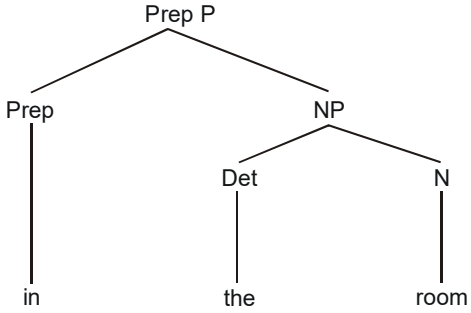


b) *He leant the umbrella against the wall*



In our earlier sections, we have discussed the constituents of the NP and the VP. Let us take up the prepositional phrase construction here.

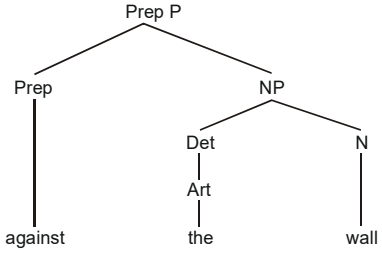
i) *in the room*



P.S. Rule : Prep P' → Prep + NP

NP' → Det + N

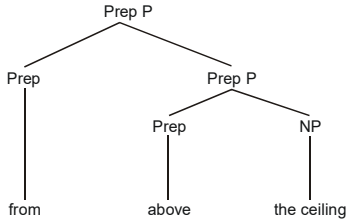
ii) *against the wall*



P.S. Rule : Prep P' → Prep + NP

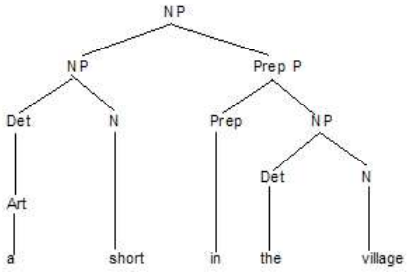
NP' → Det + N

ii) Prepositional phrases containing another prep p e.g. from above the ceiling



P.S. Rule : Prep P ' $\rightarrow$ P +

iv) Prepositional phrases within NPs e.g. *A school in the village*



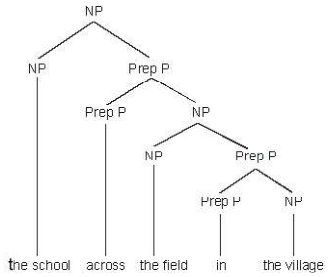
P.S. Rule : NP' $\rightarrow$ NP + Prep P

NP' $\rightarrow$ Det + N

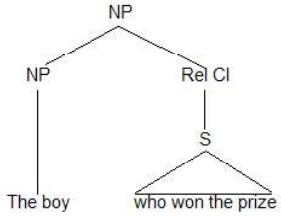
Prep P' $\rightarrow$ + NP

v) There may be more than one Prep Ps in an NP e.g. *<u>the school</u>* *<u>across the field</u>* *<u>in the village</u>*

NP Prep P Prep P



These forms of the NP are also possible. Interestingly we can even have sentences within NPs esp. relative clause e.g. The boy *who won the prize*



7.4.5 Constituents of Adjective and Adverb Phrases

In our discussion on the constituents of the NP at 7.4.2, we had noted that the adjective phrase (Adj P) can be a constituent of the NP. In fact there may be more than one adjective phrase as constituents in the NP. An Adj P can consist of only one adjective e.g. the adjective *old*.

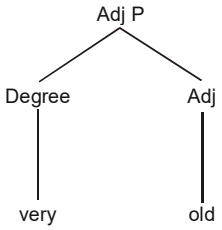
i)



P.S. Rule : Adj P' → Adj

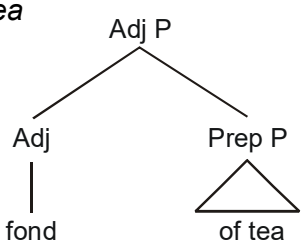
However, we shall see that an Adj P can have other constituents as well.

ii) *very old*



Rule : Adj P' → Degree + Adj

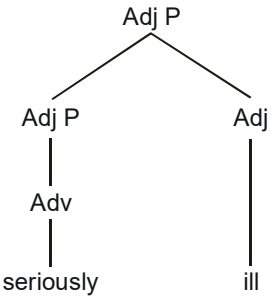
iii) *fond of tea*



Rule: Adj P' → Adj + Prep P

Prep P ' → Adj + NP

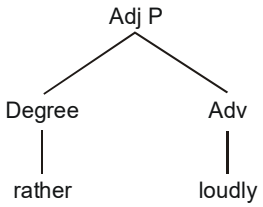
iv) *seriously ill*



Rule : Adj P ' → + Adj + (Prep P)

v) The Adv P at (iv) above can have other elements too

rather loudly



Rule : Adv P' → (Deg) + Adv



CHECK YOUR PROGRESS

Q 9: Draw tree diagrams of the following syntactic constituents and formulate the P.S. rules.

Noun Phrases:

i) The last lesson ii) The first three months

iii) All the boys who came yesterday

iv) The tired, old man who lives in the village

Verb Phrases in the following sentences:

i) I saw the film ii) I have seen the film

iii) She has been reading since morning

iv) The train had left

Prepositional phrases:

i) at the station ii) for an hour

iii) from above the clouds iv) in the morning

Sentence:

i) The girl wrote the poem ii) John is a singer

Q 10: Write short notes on

i) discovery procedure ii) Determiner

iii) Ordinal iv) Quantifier

Q 11: Give examples of the seven basic sentence patterns.



7.5 LET US SUM UP

In this unit, we looked at the different constituents of the sentence structure and identified different techniques of presenting sentence

structures by making use of *box diagrams* and *tree diagrams*. In this unit, we learnt the hierarchical structure of syntactic constituents in terms of sentence'!clause'!phrase'!word'!morphome. We learnt the technique of I.C. analysis and noted its strengths and weakness. We learnt the different elements of syntax in terms of the sentence, the NP, the VP, the Prep P, the Adj P, the Adverb P, the Complex NP. We learnt the formulation of P.S. Rules and T. Rules. We noted the concepts of deep structure and surface structure. We also understood the relationship between syntax and semantics.



7.6 FURTHER READING

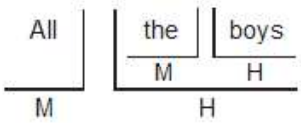
1) Crystal, D. (1984). *First Dictionary of Linguistics and Phonetics. London:* Andre Deutch.
2) Lyons, John. (2002). *Language and Linguistics.* Cambridge.
3) Prakashan, V. & Abbi, A. (1986). *Semantic Theories and Language Teaching,* Allied, India.
4) Radford, Andrew. (2007). *Transformational Grammar.* Cambridge.
5) Syal, P & Jindal D. V. (1999). *An Introduction to Linguistics.* Prentice Hall of India.
6) Verma, S. K., & Krishnaswami. (1999). *Modern Linguistics.* New Delhi: Oxford University Press.



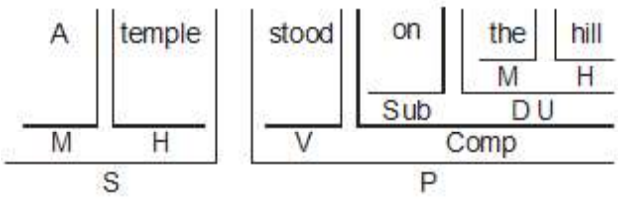
7.7 ANSWERS TO CHECK YOUR PROGRESS (HINTS ONLY)

Ans to Q 1-4: See *Introduction* to this unit.

Ans to Q 5: a)



b)

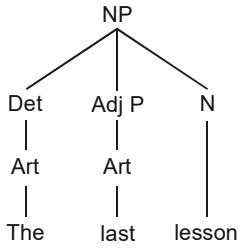


c)– (e) try yourself

Ans to Q 6-8: See Section 5.3.2

Ans to Q 9: *Noun Phrases*

i) *The last lesson*



P.S. Rule: NP' → Det + Adj P + N

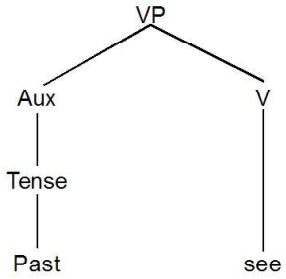
Adj P' → Adj

Det' → Art

ii) – (iv) Try yourself

Verb Phrase

i)I *saw* the film

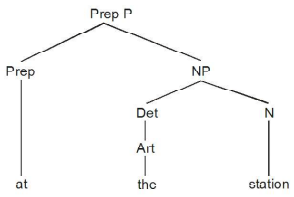


P.S. Rule: VP' → Aux + V

Aux' → Tense

Prep Phrase

i) *at the station*



P.S. Rule: Prep P' → Prep + NP

NP' → Det + N

Det' → Art

Sentence

P.S. Rule: S' → NP + VP

NP' → Det + N

VP' → VP + NP

VP' → Aux + V

(Note VP: The bar on the top indicates a lower category than the VP without the box)

Ans to Q 10-11: Try yourself



7.8 POSSIBLE QUESTIONS

Q 1: Write a note on I C Analysis.

Q 2: Discuss the limitations of I C Analysis.

Q 3: How do you account for the hierarchical structure of English sentences?

Q 4: Write notes on:

a) Noun Phrase

b) Verb Phrase

c) Prepositional Phrase

d) Adjective Phrase

Q 5: What is T. G. Grammar?

Q 6: Derive the following interrogative sentences from their kernels :

a) Did the girl write the poem?

b) Have you read the book?

*** ***** ***

UNIT 8: SYNTAX II

UNIT STRUCTURE

8.1 Learning Objectives

8.2 Introduction

8.3 Different Elements of Syntax

8.4 I.C. Analysis

8.5 T.G. Grammar

- 8.5.1 Distinctions of Traditional Grammar with TG Grammar
- 8.5.2 Deep and Surface Structure
- 8.5.3 Transformational Analysis

8.6 Syntax and Semantics

8.7 Let us Sum up

8.8 Further Reading

8.9 Answers to Check Your Progress (Hints Only)

8.10 Possible Questions

8.1 LEARNING OBJECTIVES

After going through this unit, you will be able to

- understand the different elements of syntax
- appreciate the strengths and weaknesses of I.C. Analysis
- understand the techniques underlying T. G. Grammar
- distinguish between the features of syntax and semantics.

8.2 INTRODUCTION

This unit is a continuation of Unit–7 titled Syntax–I wherein we discussed the term syntax as a level of linguistic description. We discussed in that unit how constituents like the word combine to form phrases, clauses and sentences. We discussed the constituent structures of the NP, VP, Prep P, Adj P and Adv P. In this unit we shall discuss the constituents in terms of the hierarchical structure of the language by taking the morpheme as the smallest and the sentence as the largest unit forming a hierarchy.

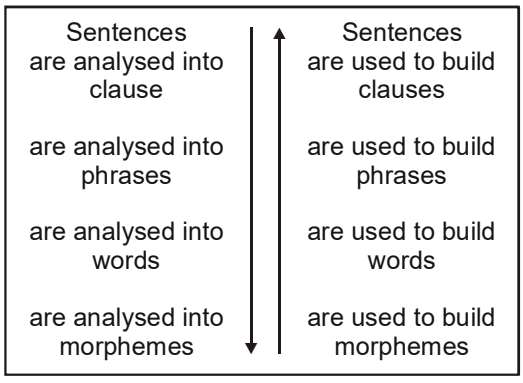
Next, we discuss the concept of Immediate Constituent Analysis or I

C Analysis which is essentially a structuralist approach to the analysis of sentence structure. Structural linguistics applied what is known as the discovery procedure in its attempt to search for a set of operations for the correct description of a language structure. In our presentation of I C analysis, we shall use the tree diagram as a convenient way of description of the constituents.

We shall note that with the later development on the study of language as a rule-governed creative process, there had appeared an alternative approach to the study of syntactic structure known as transformational generative grammar commonly called TG grammar initiated by the American linguist Noam Chomsky. His model of grammatical description proposed in *Syntactic Structures* (1957) was further revised in his book *Aspects of the Theory of Syntax* (1965). The theory of grammar as presented in the book was called the Standard Theory. Chomsky presented three models of grammar namely, Finite State grammar, Phrase Structure grammar and Transformational Grammar along with a set of Rewrite rules or Phrase Structure rules (P.S. Rules) and transformational rules. We shall introduce you to the operations of TG grammar and conclude the unit with a discussion on the distinction between syntax and semantics.

8.3 DIFFERENT ELEMENTS OF SYNTAX

The term *syntax* in Greek means 'arrangement'. The different elements of syntax refer to the constituents or units that are arranged to form larger constructions: the *phrase,* the *clause* and the *sentence*. These constituents of syntax form a hierarchical structure of five ranks which can be shown as follows:



In the description above, the morpheme is the smallest unit of grammatical inquiry. In the hierarchical structure, it is placed at one end of the scale while the sentence is placed at the other end. In between them, there are several syntactic constituents related to one another in a hierarchy. The point can be illustrated with the following example:

(1) The passengers had noticed that the train had been running very late.

This sentence contains the following two clauses:

a) The passengers had noticed

b) that the train had been running very late.

Clause (a) contains the following phrases:

i) The passengers

ii) had noticed

Clause (b) contains the following phrases:

i) the train

ii) had been running

iii) very late.

The sentence contains a few words made up of more than one morpheme:

- passengers = passenger + plural morpheme ‘s’.
- noticed = notice + past tense morphome ‘–ed’.
- had = have + past tense.
- been = be + past participle ‘–en’.
- running = run + present participle ‘–ing’.

(Note that ‘that’ is a subordinator in the sentence.)

The above discussion makes it clear that the sentence contains a hierarchical structure of a number of constituents belonging to a restricted set of categories. By considering the nature of categories, we postulate a two level theory of categories.

(1) Word level category: Noun (N), Verb (V), Adjective (Adj.), Preposition (P), Adverb (Adv.), Modal (Mod.), Determines (Det.) etc.

(2) Phrase level category: Noun Phrase (NP), Verb Phrase (VP) Adjective Phrase (Adj. P), Preposition Phrase (PP), Adverbial Phrase (Adv. P).

8.4. I.C. ANALYSIS

In this unit we attempt to discuss how the principles of immediate constituent analysis, commonly called I C analysis operates in a description of the basic linguistic units of a sentence structure. It is notable that the system of I C analysis is a tool of structural linguistics for working out a "discovery procedure" which when applied to the data of an unknown language would yield the correct description of the language. The term *discovery procedure* refers to a set of techniques which can be automatically or mechanically applied to a sample of language and which will produce a correct grammatical analysis.

One of the important contributions of structural linguistics to the theory of syntax has been the analysis of immediate constituents of a sentence structure. Immediate constituent analysis, commonly known as I C Analysis is an approach for the analysis of sentence structures. It works through a process of pure segmentation, dividing a sentence structure into its immediate constituents in a series of steps up to a stage when no further divisions can be made. As in the case of words (see the unit on Morphology) there is a hierarchy of structuring in sentences. Through I C analysis we can discover how units are layered in sentences, each lower-level division can be seen in terms of a constituent that is part of a higher level constituent. Let us takes the sentence *The boy chased the dog* and analyse the hierarchy of structuring of constituents:

In order to break up the constituents to its smallest unit known as the *ultimate constituents*, we followed the following steps.

a) Identifying the two major constituents of the sentence: *The boy* and *chased the dog*.

b) Dividing the next bigger constituent into *chased* and *the dog*.

c) Continue dividing the constituents into two until no further division can be made *The boy* into *The* and *boy*, *chased* into *chase* and *ed*, *the dog* into *the* and *dog*.

Thus, we have *the*, *by*, *chase*, *ed*, *the*, and *dog* as the ultimate constituents of the sentence. They are ultimate constituents because these

constituents cannot be broken down any further at the morphological level. Each of these units is a morpheme.

Having broken up a sentence into its constituents of different levels of hierarchy, we can start labelling the constituents. Structural linguistics has provided several models of labelling of I C Analysis. Some structural linguists group constructions in terms of the *function* of the constituents namely:

- The structure of Predication (Subject + Predicate)
- The structure of Modification (Modifier + Head)
- The structure of Complementation (Verbal + Complement)
- The structure of Sub-ordination (Subordinator + Dependent unit)
- The structure of Co-ordination (Independent unit + Co-ordinator + Independent unit)

Each of these structures is briefly illustrated below:

(a) The Structure of Predicate: In the I C analysis framework, the structure of a simple sentence can be analysed in terms of the structure of predication i.e. in terms of *subject* (S) and *predicate* (P). The sentence– *The boy kicked the ball* can be analysed in terms of S and P by using the box diagram as follows:

(**b) The Structure of modification:** The structure implies that a noun phrase (NP) construction can be analysed in terms of Modifiers and Head or M+H. In an NP, the head-word may be a noun which is called Head and the determiner that precedes it is called Modifier. We take the subject NP of <u>The boy kicked the ball</u> i.e. The boy

The	boys
M	H

When the NP consists of additional elements, as in <u>All the boys</u>, the analysis can be mode as follows.

All	the	boys
	M	H
M	H	

Here the pre-determiner modifies the NP the boys.

(c) **The Structure of Complementation:** This structure implies that the predicate part of a sentence can be analysed in terms of verbal and complement or v+c as in

The boy kicked the ball
v c

Traditionally, in the above sentence, 'the ball' is the object of the sentence. The use of v+c here indicates that in I C analysis a distinction between the object and the complement is not felt necessary. The term complement is used to cover both object and complement.

(**d)** **The Structure of Subordinator:** This structure of subordination implies that a prepositional phrase construction within a sentence can be analysed in terms of subordinator and dependent unit or sub + DU. Generally, the preposition element in a prepositional phrase construction is a subordinator as in the prepositional phrase in the room which is analysed below:

in the room
M H
Sub DU

We can now take a complete sentence to break up the elements in a binary structure

The man lives in this village
M H
sub D U
M H V C
S P

(e) **The Structure of Co-ordination:** The structure can be illustrated with a sentence construction having two independent units that are linked by or co-ordinated by a conjunction or a co-ordinator or iu +co+iu. It is natable that while in other analyses a binary pattern is used, it is only in the structure of co-ordination that a non-binary pattern is considered acceptable. These independent units may be:

(i) two independent clauses that traditionally constitute a compound sentence:

He is a teacher but his wife is a nurse
iu co iu

(ii) two noun phrases linked by a coordinator

An old man and his two grandsons
iu co iu

iii) two nouns linked by a co-ordinator

Jack and Jill
iv co iv

Weaknesses of IC analysis:

One of the major weaknesses of IC analysis is that it fails to distinguish between *object* and *complement* in its analysis and treats sentences like *She is a teacher* and *She wrote the letter* both in terms of S+V+C construction. Thereby, it confuses object and complement in its analysis.

Secondly, the binary divisions do not hold good for yes no type interrogative sentence patterns as in: *Is he coming?*, *Are you coming?* etc. since the 'be' is a part of the verb phrase construction. One has to make use of other divisions such as:

is he coming

Such descriptions are rather difficult to comprehend.

Thirdly, depending upon meaning, an ambiguous sentence or a phrase like *old men and women* would require more than one analysis. For example,

a) When both men and women are old :

Old men and women
IU CO IU
M H

b) When only the men are old :

Old men and women
M H
IU CO IU

Fourthly, I C analysis fails to reveal the relationships between sentence types such as active and passive, affirmative and negative, statement and questions, simple, complex and compound sentences.

Moreover, there are several models of I C analysis. The earliest model was developed by Bloomfield but was later modified by Kenneth Pike and systematized by other linguists subsequently. With so many models available to us, one is likely to get confused with models.



CHECK YOUR PROGRESS

Q 1: Draw I C analysis of the following:

(a) All the boys

(b) A temple stood on a hill

(c) A very old temple

(d) The boy broke the window.

(e) The little girl lost her doll.

8.5 T. G. GRAMMAR

Transformational generative grammar generally known as TG grammar is a model of grammatical description proposed by the American linguist Noam Chomsky in a book titled *Syntactic Structures* (1957). A radically revised form of the model appeared in his book *Aspects of the Theory of Syntax* (1965) where Chomsky presents three models of grammar, namely (a) *finite state grammar*, (b) *phrase structure grammar* and (c) *transformational grammar*.

Chomsky observes that the finite state grammar is an extremely simple kind of grammar. It is incapable of accounting for many important processes of sentence formation. As an alternative, he suggests the possibilities of Phrase Structure grammar as a marked improvement over Finite State grammar. Phrase Structure (PS) grammar considers the sentence as a linear sequence of elements described through a set of *P.S. rules* by following certain conventions and notations in formal terms (against functional) and lexical rules. In addition Chomsky proposed transformational rules (T rules) as we shall see here.

8.5.1 Distinctions of Traditional Grammar with TG Grammar

Basically, grammar is a way of talking about how we use words to make units called phrases, clauses and sentences that communicate meaning. The meaning of a sentence is greater than the meaning of individual words that make the larger units. Words are elements or units that enter into relations with other words to form new units at different levels of complexity. Grammar makes statements about linguistic units and their relations. For example, let us take the sentence that we had used in our description of I.C. Analysis: *The boy kicked the ball.* Traditional grammar will analyse the sentence as follows:

The boy / / kicked / the ball.

Sub pred

(a) The boy : subject

(b) kicked the ball : predicate

(c) kicked : verb

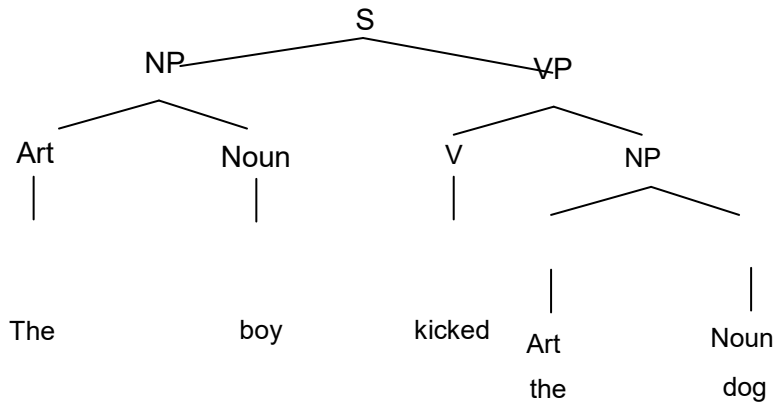
(d) the ball : object

Let us now take the same sentence for a description in the framework of structural linguistics. In structural linguistics the analysis would indicate that the sentence in question is an instance of an English sentence pattern of the form:

Det + noun + verb + det + noun

Here det stands for determiner. The first noun in the pattern functions as the subject and the second noun as the object.

Now let us try to find out how the analysis made by transformational generative grammar, briefly called TG grammar will look like. In TG grammar the analysis of the sentence 'The boy kicked the dog' will look like this:



We can explain the rules underlying the way the sentence is made. These rules called phrase structure (PS) rules and lexical rules are a marked improvement over I C analysis by considering the sentence as a linear sequence of elements. PS rules are formulated by following certain conventions and notations in formal terms (against functional). The PS rules operating in the above sentence are as follows:

(a) *PS Rules*

S $\rightarrow$ NP + VP

NP $\rightarrow$ Det + N

VP $\rightarrow$ V + NP

(b) *Lexical rules*

Det $\rightarrow$ the

N $\rightarrow$ boy, ball

V $\rightarrow$ kicked

Although the information given in the three different analyses namely traditional grammar, structural linguistics and TG grammar is essentially identical, the three approaches differ substantially in their mode of presenting the information.

(a) In traditional grammar the relation between words is highlighted. That is, the words are grouped into units whose relative function is indicated by the terms subject, verb and object

(b) The structural pattern is almost the opposite. It directly identifies the basic units by parts of speech but does not

itself indicate the relations the words enter into to form larger units.

(c) The TG analysis directly identifies the parts of speech of the individual words and at the same time, shows the abstract units formed by relations between words.

But this is not the only strong point about TG grammar. If there were no more than this to TG grammar, the kind of analysis presented here would be merely a revised version of traditional grammatical description presented diagrammatically. TG grammar is fundamentally different from both traditional grammar and structural linguistics in two ways:

(i) TG grammar provides a two-stage analysis. The analysis with the help of a tree diagram followed by the PS rules, constitute the first stage.

(ii) The second stage may add new elements to the string of words in the first analysis, it may delete words from the string, or it may rearrange the words of the string into a new order e.g. active – passive.

These changes are called transformations. New sentences in the language are generated through the process of transformations and it is from this process of generating sentences that the term *transformational generative grammar* is taken. One group of transformations changes certain types of active sentences into a corresponding passive sentence. For example, let us look at the following pairs of sentences:

1. The boy kicked the ball.
2. The ball was kicked by the boy.

These sentences have the same meaning; but they are different arrangement of words. Sentence 2 has reversed the two noun phrases of sentence 1, added the verb *be*, changed the verb *kicked* into *was kicked* and added the preposition *by*. Thus one of the basic ideas of TG grammar is that more than one second stage sentence can be produced from a single first stage sentence.

8.5.2 Deep and Surface Structure

In TG grammar each sentence is considered to have two levels of structure: deep structure and surface structure. The surface structure is generally the syntactic structure of the sentence which a person speaks, hears, reads or writes. Look at these pairs of sentences:

1. The police arrested the thief.
2. The thief was arrested.

The string of words given in sentence 1 is called a *deep structure* that contrasts with the term *surface structure*.

The term *deep structure* refers to the "abstract syntactic representation of a sentence – an underlying level of structural organization which specifies all the factors governing the way the sentence should be interpreted" (Crystal). The first string "The police arrested the thief" is the deep structure while its passive form in the string of words given in sentence 2 is the surface structure. The deep structure analysis not only provides parts of speech information about the individual words but also shows the way words are related to form more abstract units.

Lexical items are inserted into syntactic forms, with the application of "selection restrictions" and concepts such as *subject, object* are defined. By applying the principles of 'selection restriction'– a term from semantics– we avoid semantic anomalies. The rules prevent the generation of un-meaningful or anomalous sentences such as **Colourless, green ideas sleep furiously* or combinations such as **silent noise*. We are prevented from saying **The man killed* instead of saying *The man died*.

8.5.3 Transformational Analysis

As the term TG grammar suggests, this category of grammar is both transformational and generative. What is distinctive about this grammar is that it first takes up the P.S. component by analysing the sentences, dividing them into parts and showing their relative

functions. But more than that, it completely rearranges them and shows the interrelatedness between sentences. Let us see how T.G. Grammar operates by taking the sentence:

a) The boy read the book.

The deep structure of the sentence is realized in a number of surface structures:

i) The boy did not read the book.
(Surface structure, *negative)*

ii) Did the boy read the book?
(Surface structure, *interrogative*)

iii) Didn't the boy read the book?
(Surface structure, *negative interrogative*)

iv) What did the boy read?
(Surface structure, *interrogative*)

v) The book was read by the boy.
(Surface structure, *affirmative passive*)

vi) The book wasn't read by the boy.
(Surface structure, *negative passive*) etc.

The surface structure sentences are to be treated as transforms of the deep structure. Thus, if we are talking about *interrogative* transforms, we shall present the following derivations:

The boy read the book Did the boy read the book?

The boy read the book Didn't the boy read the book?

Transformational analysis not only shows the interrelations between sentences but also explains the ambiguities between sentences that appear identical but are transforms. Here is a very common ambiguous sentence:

The police stopped drinking by midnight.

The sentence is ambiguous in view of the fact that one deep structure is realized as two different surface structures. We cannot tell whether the police was drinking and stopped doing so or other people were drinking and were stopped from doing so. We can however resolve the ambiguity by showing that the same sentence

can be analysed as being transforms of two different sets of deep structures e.g.

a) Some people were drinking. The police stopped this act by midnight.

b) The police were drinking. They stopped drinking by midnight.

Let us now get back to the deep structure once again:

The boy read the book.

Here is an analysis of its surface structure in the interrogative. The PS rules and lexical rules are as follows:

(Copy the tree diagram at the bottom of page 126 original along with the transforms)

Interrog Past – the boy – read – the book

Do support Past – do – the boy – read – the book

Affix switch – the boy – read – the book

By applying the T rules of interrogatives we switched the tense to the front. But since tense (-ed) is a bound morpheme it cannot be attached to a noun and hence there was the need for a do support.



CHECK YOUR PROGRESS

Q 2: State how the following sentences are ambiguous:

(a) The shooting of the hunter was terrible.

(b) The chicken is ready to eat.

(c) I saw her in the street.

(d) I like money more than my wife.

8.6 SYNTAX AND SEMANTICS

The study of meaning which is the core of semantics became the subject of renewed interest in syntax especially with the development of the Transformational generative model of grammar. However, in the early version of Transformational grammar in the 60s, meaning was virtually ignored. It was then felt that syntactic rules operated independently of meaning. It was with the publication of a paper by Katz and Fodor (1963)

titled “The Structure of a Sentence Theory”, that marked a basic change in the approach of syntax to address issues on meaning.

To Katz and Fodor, a sentence in isolation does not convey meaning. Hence, a semantic interpretation of a construction must attain priority over syntactic theories. They observed that to achieve a semantic grasp on a piece of text, two sub-components are of utmost importance :

a) a dictionary of lexical items of the language, and

b) the projection rules which operate on full grammatical description of sentences and on dictionary entries to produce semantic interpretation for every sentence in the language.

The primary contention of the theory of Katz and Fodor is that meaning is a matter of great theoretical concern to syntax. To substantiate the point Katz and Fodor make a reference to (a) *Semantic ambiguity* and (b) *semantic anomaly*. They observe that—

- semantic ambiguity occurs when an underlying structure contains an ambiguous word or words that contribute its or their multiple sense to the meaning of whole sentences, thus enabling that sentence to be used to make more than one statement, request, query etc.
- Semantic anomaly is the limiting case of exclusion by the operation of selection restriction. Semantically anomalous sentences occur when the meanings of the component words of a sentence are such that they cannot combine to form a coherent and directly intelligible sentence, (Katz, 1966).

One of the major concerns of TG grammar has been to explain ambiguities and paraphrase relationships. This is an area where syntax and semantics come together. in the terminology of TG Grammar, an ambiguity results when two different deep structures happen by accident to end up with exactly the same surface structures. For example, by different transformations the two unrelated deep structure sentences *Planes which fly can be dangerous* and *For a person to fly planes can be dangerous* can have the same surface structure:

Flying planes can be dangerous.

Why is this sentence ambiguous? The ambiguity of this sentence

occurs from the fact that there are at least two meanings of this sentence:

a) Planes which fly can be dangerous. (They may hit eagles, other planes and cause a variety of other disasters to passengers.)

b) For a person to fly a plane, i.e. a pilot, the activity is dangerous. (It is not exactly like riding a bicycle in the backyard of your house).

In T.G. grammar, a paraphrase relation results when one deep structure sentence can be turned into two or more different surface sentences by applying different transformations. In sentence (a) above we have the following transformation to resolve the ambiguity:

(i) Planes fly. They can be dangerous.

In sentence (b) above we have the following transformation to resolve the ambiguity:

(ii) Some people fly planes. This can be dangerous.

On the other hand, semantic anomaly is a case of wrong use of collocations. Katz observes that there is a distinct *projection rule* for each distinct grammatical relation. The adequacy of a dictionary entry or a projection rule depends on how well it plays its role within the overall descriptive system. The term “projection” in T.G. Grammar refers to the capability of a grammar to extend the analysis of any given set of sentences so that it applies also to the potentially infinite numbers of sentences in the language as a whole. Projection rules are established as part of the semantic component. Their function is to assign a semantic interpretation to each string of grammatical element generated by the syntactic component.



8.7 LET US SUM UP

The unit begins with a hierarchical presentation of the constituent structures of the morpheme, word, phrase clause and the sentence by taking the morpheme as the smallest and the sentence as the largest unit forming a hierarchy. Next, we discussed the Immediate Constituent Analysis or I C Analysis which is essentially a structuralist approach to the analysis of sentence structure. Structural linguistics applied what is known as the

discovery procedure in its attempt to search for a set of operations for the correct description of a language structure. We learnt the technique of analysing the elements of the sentence structure by using the tree diagram. Next, we discussed transformational generative grammar commonly called TG grammar initiated by the American linguist Noam Chomsky. We learnt that this model of grammatical description was proposed by Chomsky in a book titled *Syntactic Structures* (1957). A radically revised form of the mode appeared in his book *Aspects of the Theory of Syntax* (1965). We discussed the distinction between traditional grammar, structural grammar and TG grammar in three models of grammar namely, Finite State grammar, Phrase Structure grammar and Transformational Grammar along with a set of Rewrite rules or Phrase Structure rules (P.S. Rules) and transformational rules. We discussed TG grammar by drawing a distinction between deep structure and surface structure. We concluded the unit with a discussion on the distinction between syntax and semantics by addressing the issue of semantic ambiguities and semantic anomaly.



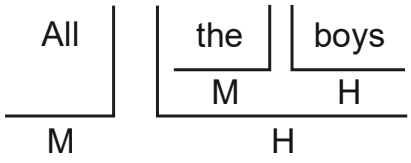
8.8 FURTHER READING

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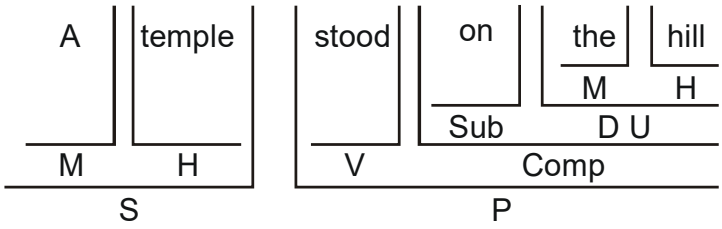
8.9 ANSWERS TO CHECK YOUR PROGRESS (HINTS ONLY)

Ans to Q 1:

a.



b.



(c) – (e) Try yourself

Ans to Q 2:

(a) to (d) Try yourself.

8.10 POSSIBLE QUESTIONS

Q 1: Give brief answers to the following questions.

(a) Briefly explain the term ‘ultimate constituent’.

(b) Give an example of a subordinator.

(c) Name the elements in the structure of complementation.

Q 2: Write short notes on

(a) PS Rules

(b) Syntactic constituent

(c) Semantic ambiguity

(d) Semantic anomaly.

Q 3: Answer the following questions.

(a) Discuss the distinctive features of I.C. analysis.

(b) Discuss the terms ‘deep structure’ and ‘surface structure’.

(c) Give an example of a pair of sentences, which differ in surface structure but have the same underlying deep structure.

(d) Analyse the sentence ‘Did the teacher come to class?’ showing the transformation rules that have been used.

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UNIT 9: SEMANTICS I

UNIT STRUCTURE

9.1 Learning Objectives

9.2 Introduction

9.3 Scope of Semantics

9.4 Different Elements of Meaning

- 9.4.1 Conceptual Meaning
- 9.4.2 Connotative Meaning
- 9.4.3 Social & Affective Meaning
- 9.4.4 Reflected and Collocative Meaning
- 9.4.5 Thematic Meaning

9.5 Componential Analysis

9.6 Let us Sum up

9.7 Further Reading

9.8 Answers to Check Your Progress (Hints Only)

9.9 Possible Questions

9.1 LEARNING OBJECTIVES

After going through this unit, you will be able to:

- understand the concept of semantics as a level of linguistic description
- appreciate the scope of semantics as a science of meaning
- distinguish the different elements of meaning
- understand the concept of componential analysis.

9.2 INTRODUCTION

In this unit, we propose to introduce you to the term *semantics* as a level of linguistic description. It is a major branch of linguistics that is concerned with the study of meaning in language. We use language to express meaning so that what we say or write is understood by others. In this unit on semantics our primary concern will be to discuss the concept from a historical perspective by stating that though the term semantics is

fairly new, the subject is very old. In your unit of semantics, you will find that there are several approaches to the study of meaning in language. The study of meaning has a long tradition. It can be traced back to classical Greece to the philosophers Plato and Aristotle. We shall focus our attention to this brief history by mentioning the contributions of Michel Breal, C.K. Ogden and I.A. Richards. We next move on to the different elements of meaning beginning with conceptual meaning also known as denotative meaning. You will find that a word is analysed in terms of its different components on the basis of which we provide meaning to a word. Next, we discuss connotative meaning to refer to the meaning which is attributed to a given word or expression by its users. Other elements of meaning that we are taking up in this unit are social and affective meaning to refer to what is communicated of the feelings and attitudes of the speaker/writer. In our discussion on reflected meaning, we refer to what is communicated through association with another sense of the same expression. While referring to collocative meaning we refer to what is communicated through association with words which tend to occur in the environment with another word. Further, we take up thematic meaning to refer to what is communicated by the way in which the message is organized in terms of order and emphasis. The unit also discusses the concept of componential analysis of meaning. it is an extremely interesting way of formalizing, or making absolutely precise, the sense relations that hold among different lexemes. The other related issues of meaning are being taken up in Unit 10 that follows.

9.3 SCOPE OF SEMANTICS

In very simple terms, semantics is the study of meaning. The term did not come to be widely used until the 20th century, but the subject that it represents is very old, reaching back to the writings of Plato and Aristotle and attracting the special interests of philosophers, logicians and linguists. In Greek studies while the philosophical approach to meaning was to examine the relation between linguistics expressions and the phenomena in the world to which they refer, the logical approach was to study meaning in terms of logical systems of analysis. The approach of these philosophers

to meaning was to investigate the relation between linguistic expressions in words and the things, actions events and qualities they stand for. Such relation, e.g. the relation between the word 'dog' and the 'animal' is seen as referent relation.

However, our concern in this unit is the linguistic approach to meaning. Our primary focus is on the approach of the linguists to the study of the semantic properties of natural languages. Linguists have investigated, for example, the way in which meaning in a language is structured. They have distinguished between different types of meaning. We shall discuss these types here along with the sense and reference relation as well.

From a survey of the literature available in the field, it is found that it was Michel Breal (1832-1915), French philologist who in the year 1893 had coined the French word 'semantique' from the Greek word 'semantikos'. Professor Frank Palmer observes that in 1894, the word 'semantics' was used for the first time in a paper read at the American Philological Association entitled ''Reflected Meaning: A point in Semantics''. In 1900, there appeared Breal's book Semantics : Studies in the science of Meaning (1983- p1). It is one of the earliest books on linguistics as we understand it today in view of the fact that it treated semantics as the science of meaning.

One of the most famous books on the subject is *The Meaning of Meaning* (1923) by C. K. Ogden and I. A. Richards. But In this book the authors hardly use the term 'semantics' though primarily the book deals with topics that touch semantics. Chapter IX of the book ''The Meaning of Meaning'' is exclusively devoted to meaning concepts. In this chapter, the authors list no less than sixteen different meanings of the word 'meaning' (pp 186-187). Here are some of them:

1) An intrinsic property of some thing
2) A unique unanalyzable relation to other things
3) The other word annexed to a word in a dictionary
4) The connotation of a word
5) An essence
6) An activity projected into an object
7) An event intended

8) That which is actually related to a sign by a chosen relation.

These definitions of meaning can be taken as a basis for a discussion on the different aspects of meaning. In our next section of this unit we shall consider some of them.

9.4 DIFFERENT ELEMENTS OF MEANING

When we discuss the different elements of meaning we have to understand that meaning cannot be assumed to exist independent of the conceptualization which is shared by the members of a speech community. Taking the definitions of Ogden and Richards, or more appropriately, a follow up of their work, G. N. Leech (1981) brings out seven aspects of meaning which appears to us to be fairly comprehensive for a study of meaning and meaning relations of words. These seven aspects have been discussed below:

9.4.1 Conceptual Meaning

The term 'conceptual meaning' is also known as denotative meaning or logical meaning. This is the literal meaning of a word indicating the idea or concept to which it refers. The idea or concept is the minimal unit of meaning which is referred to as 'sememe' that correlates with phoneme which is the smallest unit of language (written). Lyons (1977) uses the words 'semes' and 'classemes' (p 326) to refer to the minimal distinctive features of meaning. Indeed, there is a similarity between a 'sememe' and a phoneme in the structure and organization of concepts. A phoneme can be described by using three terms labels likes the following ones:

i) /p/ = - voiced + bilabial + plosive

ii) /b/ = + voiced + bilabial + plosive

In the same way a concept can be described in terms of its structure of meaning by making use of three-term labels as follows. Such an analysis of meaning is called componential analysis.

i) man = + human – female + adult

ii) girl = + human + female - adult

iii) cow = + bovine + female + adult

iv) boar = +porcine - female + adult

If any of these conceptual features change, the concept also changes. For example, in (ii) above, if - adult is changed to + adult, the concept of the 'girl' changes to 'woman'. In other words, the change of one minimal quality or 'sememe' changes the concept itself. Hence, it may be stated that conceptual meaning deals with the core meaning of words.

9.4.2 Connotative Meaning

The term connotative meaning is used to refer to the meaning which is attributed to a given word or expression by its users. Connotative meaning is undoubtedly the additional meaning that a concept carries. Leech (1981) defines it as the "communicative value an expression has by virtue of what it refers to over and above its purely conceptual content''. That is, apart from its denotative meaning, a further meaning is attached to a word, which comes from its reference to other things in the real world.

It is most certainly a fact that in the real world the denotative meaning of a word may be associated with some other features or attributes. For example, the conceptual meaning of cow is : + bovine + female + adult. The connotative meaning of cow is that it is a sacred animal. Thus, connotative meaning is not part of what is conceived, it is part of what is being perceived. The fact that the cow is a sacred animal is part of the connotative meaning of the word cow.

Indeed, connotative meaning consists of the attributes associated with a concept. These association come into use over a period of time in a particular culture and can change with change in time. Thus, though the connotative meaning of cow as a sacred animal is applicable in a particular cultural context, in another cultural contest it may not hold good. In other words, denotative meaning remains stable since it defines the essential attributes of a concept.

But connotative meaning changes as it is based on associations made to the concept. These associations are often subject to change.

9.4.3 Social and Affective Meaning

Social meaning is the meaning that is conveyed by a word or an expression by taking into account the socio-cultural background of the users of a language. The term social meaning is generally used to refer to the sum total of the social circumstances in which a piece of language is used. The social circumstance can be determined by the geographical region or social class. We recognize some words or pronunciation to be regionally or socially at variance.

Secondly, the meaning of that piece of language can be understood according to the different style and situation in which the word is used. For example, though the words 'pal' and 'friend' refer to the same person – that is, their denotative meaning is the same – each of these words belongs to a particular situation of use. The word 'pal' is used in an informal situation, while the word 'friend' is used in a slightly formal situation. Hence, the two words cannot co-occur in the same situation.

Social meaning derives from an awareness of the style in which something is written or spoken and of the relationship between speaker and listener. The relationship which can be formal, semi-formal or informal, largely determines the meaning of a piece of discourse. To illustrate the point, let us take the following sentences:

a) We were somewhat dismayed by his lack of response to our invitation

b) We were rather fed up that he didn't answer when we invited him.

The first utterance is fairly formal unlike the second one which is less formal. The choice of words and phrases determines the stylistic a social level of meaning. Leech (1981) lists four words meaning 'a place where one lives' to illustrate varying degrees of formality :

i) domicile : very formal, official

ii) residence : formal

iii) abode : poetic

iv) home : general

From this, it is only a small step to the consideration of how language reflects an individual's personal feelings or attitudes to a statement or an utterance. The meaning of that utterance grows out of the listener's or reader's response to what he hears or reads, Depending upon his feelings, he ascribes meanings beyond the literal lexical meaning of the piece of text. This is what Leech calls affective meaning (p15). For example a polite remark made to someone in the reading room of a library. ''Why are you making a noise?'' is not to be interpreted as an information question but the affective meaning which expresses annoyance should be understood.

9.4.4 Reflected and Collocative Meaning

Reflected meaning refers to the meaning, which arises in case of multiple conceptual meaning, when one sense of a word forms part of the response to another sense. As an example, let us take the word 'simple' which has several dictionary meanings eg. plain, easy to understand, natural and naïve or easily deceived. In a statement like ''His responses are 'simple' and straightforward'', the speaker may have used the word 'simple' to mean 'natural'. But the meaning 'naïve' may be reflected upon the intended meaning.

Reflected meaning of a word is fairly close to collocative meaning. A word can acquire meaning under the collocative influence of the word which it co-occurs with. Collocative meaning consists of the meaning acquired by a word under the influence of the collocated word. The words *pretty* and *handsome* share common ground in the meaning 'good-looking' , but may be distinguished by the range of nouns with which they are likely to co-occur or collocate.

- The word pretty can collocate with: girl, boy, woman, flower, garden, colour village, etc.

- The word handsome can collocate with: boy, man, car, overcoat, vessel etc.

The ranges may at times overlap as in the case of boy both the adjectives are preferable although they suggest a different kind of attractiveness because of the collocative association of the two adjectives.

We take another example to show how collocation can bring about new meanings to a word. The word 'make' for example attains different meanings under the influence of collocation eg.

a) make friends : develop friendship
b) make money : earn money
c) make tea : prepare tea
d) make up one's mind : decide
e) make up a story : to create an imaginative story

Thus, collocation confers meaning to a word.

9.4.5 Thematic Meaning

'Thematic meaning' refers to the meaning conveyed by the structure of the discourse or utterance where concepts like topic of discourse and focus of discourse are identified. Topic or theme is what we talk about; focus is the new information we give to the listener or reader. For example, here are two sentences:

a) The Principal gave away the prizes.
b) The prizes were given away by the Principal.

In sentence (a) Principal is the topic or theme and the prizes is the focus– the new information. On the other hand, in sentence (b) the prizes is the topic and the Principal is the focus. It is seen that an active sentence such as (a) ab9ve has a different meaning from its passive counterpart (b) although in conceptual content they seem to be the same. As active and its passive equivalent have different communicative values in the sense that they suggest different contexts: the active sentence seems to answer an implicit question : 'What did the principal give away?, while the passive sentence seems to answer an implicit question: 'Who gave away

the prizes?'

Thematic meaning, as Leech observes, is mainly a matter of choice between alternative grammatical construction as in:

(c) A man is waiting at the gate.

(d) There's a man waiting at the gate.

The choice is determined by the speaker's effort towards focusing attention on that word that contains the new information against a background of what is already assumed to be known.



CHECK YOUR PROGRESS

Q 1: Say whether the following statements are True or False.

a) The study of meaning is a recent phenomenon. (T/F)

b) The term 'semantics' was not widely used until the 20th century. (T/F)

c) The term 'semantics' was coined by Leonard Bloomfield. (T/F)

d) The literal meaning of a word is known as connotative meaning. (T/F)

e) Concepts like 'Topic of discourse' come under the purview of reflected meaning. (T/F)

Q 2: Fill in the blanks to complete the sentences :

a) The word ..... refers to the minimal unit of meaning.

b) The ..... meaning of cow is that it is a sacred animal

c) The term ..... meaning is generally understood in the context of the use of language in society.

d) A word can acquire meaning under the ..... influence of the word at co-occurs with.

Q 3: Give a componential analysis of

a) woman b) boy c) bull

Q 4: What is collocation?

Q 5: Explain the term sememe.

9.5 COMPONENTIAL ANALYSIS

In our discussion on conceptual meaning at 9.4.1, we made a reference to the concept of componential analysis. In this sub-section, we would like to elaborate on the term a little more considering its value in analysis of meaning. componential analysis can be defined as an approach to formalizing or making absolutely precise, the sense relations that hold among lexemes. As the name implies componential analysis involves the analysis of the sense of a lexeme into its component parts.

In 9.4.1, we gave examples of componential analysis of a few words: man, girl, cow and boar. You will note that the first two words are human beings. We can therefore extract from the sense of each of them the common factor '+human'. Similarly we cn extract from 'man' the factor '-female' while in the case of girl, we extract the factor '+female'.as for 'man' we can extract another factor '+adult' while for girl we extract the factor '-adult' in the same principle, the sense of the words woman and boy can be analysed as follows.

woman = +human +female +adult

boy = + human -female - adult

As for 'horse', 'stallion', 'mare', 'foal', 'sheep', 'ram', 'ewe', 'lamb', bull', 'cow', 'calf'; these and many other sets of words can be analysed in the same way by substituting +equine, +ovine, +bovine, +porcine etc, as the case may be for +human.



9.6 LET US SUM UP

In this unit, we discussed the concept of semantics as a major branch of linguistics that is concerned with the study of meaning in language. We discussed the concept of semantics from a historical perspective by tracing its origins to the philosophers Plato and Aristotle. From that point , we moved on to the twentieth century to bring out the concern of meaning at different times. We made an attempt to show how words derive meaning by considering their conceptual or denotative features. We made an attempt

to bring out a contrast between conceptual meaning and connotative meaning. We also showed how meaning is conveyed by a word by taking its socio-cultural background. Besides, we noted the distinctions of reflected and collocative meaning and thematic meaning.



9.7 FURTHER READING

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2) Leech, Geoffrey (1981). *Semantics*. Penguin.

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9.8 ANSWERS TO CHECK YOUR PROGRESS (HINTS ONLY)

Ans to Q 1: a) False b) True c) False d) False e) False

Ans to Q 2: a) Sememe, b) Connotative, c) Social, d) Collocative

Ans to Q 3: a) woman = + human + female + adult

b) boy = + human – female + –adult

c) bull = + bovine – female + adult

Ans to Q 4: see 9.4.4

Ans to Q 5: see 9.4.1.

Ans to Q 6: A

Ans to Q 7: a) move – walk, run, shift,

b) game – football, hockey, tennis

c) sport – swimming , boxing, jumping

d) tree – oak, sal, neem

e) dress – sari, shirt, gown.

Ans to Q 8-9: Try yourself.



9.9 POSSIBLE QUESTIONS

Q 1: Write short notes on:

a) Conceptual meaning

b) Connotative meaning

c) Social meaning

d) Affective meaning

e) Reflected meaning

f) Collocative meaning

g) Thematic meaning

Q 2: Define the term semantics.

Q 3: Discuss the contribution of Ogden and Richards to semantics.

Q 4: Explain componential analysis. Give a componential analysis of woman, mare, boar.

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UNIT 10: SEMANTICS II

UNIT STRUCTURE

10.1 Learning Objectives

10.2 Introduction

10.3 Meaning Relations

- 10.3.1 Antonymy
- 10.3.2 Synonymy
- 10.3.3 Polysemy
- 10.3.4 Hyponymy
- 10.3.5 Homonymy

10.4 Collocation Restriction

10.5 Sentence Meaning

10.6 Theories of Semantics

- 10.6.1 The Verification Theory
- 10.6.2 The Truth Conditional Theory

10.7 Let us Sum up

10.8 Further Reading

10.9 Answers to Check Your Progress (Hints Only)

10.10 Possible Questions

10.1 LEARNING OBJECTIVES

After going through this unit, you will be able to

- explain the concept of meaning relations in terms of antonymy, synonymy etc.
- appreciate the concept of sentence meaning
- appreciate collocation restriction of words
- discuss the different theories of semantics.

10.2 INTRODUCTION

This is the last unit of Block 2. This unit is a continuation of unit 9 of this Block titled Semantics I, wherein we discussed the different elements

of meaning beginning with conceptual meaning. We begin this unit by further exploring the elements of meaning with a distinction between lexical meaning of words and their grammatical meanings and move on to different meaning relations that exist in relation to different words in terms of *antonymy, synonymy, homonymy, polysemy* and *hyponymy.* We begin this unit with a discussion on the antonyms in terms of their gradability (big — small), non-gradability (male — female), relational oppositeness (buy — sell) and binary oppositeness (single —married). Next, we move on to a discussion on the synonyms in terms of absolute synonymy (which is rare in English), partial synonymy (big — large) and near synonymy (handsome — pretty) etc. Other meaning relations that are being taken up include homonymy in terms of absolute homonymy (lead, the name of a metal – lead, show the way) and partial homonymy. We tried to establish a contrast between homonymy and polysemy which refers to a case of a single lexical item having multiple meanings. Then we moved to hyponymy which refers to the inclusion of word in a lexical set. The unit also attempts to discuss collocation restriction of words by showing how some words do not collocate with some words and vice versa. This discussion is followed by a discussion on sentence meaning which is basically the sum of the meaning of the words and other constituents that compose it. We see how a change of a word in a sentence can affect the sentence meaning. Lastly, we present a brief discussion on a few theories of semantics that can account for the meaningfulness of sentences. They include the verification theory of meaning and the truth conditional theory of meaning, both related to sentence meaning.

10.3 MEANING RELATIONS

You will recall that in our discussion on the different elements of meaning at 9.4, we had noted that one of the problems for language users lies in their attempts to discover the difference between what is said and what is meant. The major part of meaning of what we say or write is located in the words that we use to express an idea or to provide information. The term ‘word’ is technically known as ‘lexeme’. The noun ‘lexeme’ is related to the adjective ‘lexical’ and another noun ‘lexical’ which means vocabulary. A

'lexeme' is a lexical unit having a meaning. The meaning conveyed by a lexeme is lexical meaning. 'Lexemes' like nouns, full verbs, adjectives and adverbs have lexical meanings. They are distinguished from the form words or function words which are a close-set of words that are also known as grammatical word and contribute to grammatical meaning. The distinction between lexical and grammatical meaning derives from the distinction between the vocabulary of a language and its grammar. Function words provide the grammatical structure for lexical words to form meaningful sentences.

However, it is the lexemes and lexical meaning that will be at the centre of our attention here. The lexical meaning of words/lexemes is its conceptual meaning which is widely assumed to be the central factor in linguistic communication. We shall see here how lexical meanings can build up meaning relations that exist among different words. These relations can be described in terms of antonymy, synonymy, homonyms, polysemy and hyponymy.

10.3.1 Antonymy

Antonymy refers to all kinds of semantic opposites. It is basically a study of oppositeness of meaning. This study can be made in terms of gradable antonyms, non-gradable antonyms, relational opposites and binary opposites.

We begin with gradable antonyms. The concept of gradability refers to the possibility of comparison and grading of lexical items. In semantics gradable terms can be best illustrated by means of pairs of words like

large –small wide-narrow

big-small high-low

old-young good-bad

hot – cold fat – thin

All these lexical items are adjectives and have in common the feature of gradability. Being gradable, they express degrees of

quality involved. Thus, a road may be wide or very wide and one road may be wider than another. It is possible to make a gradation of width, age, height etc. e.g.

wide	wider	widest
small	smaller	smallest
old	older	oldest
tall	taller	tallest,
big	bigger	biggest

When we say that one road is wider than another, we are actually placing them in a graded scale of comparison by using -er, -est, more or most with the adjective.

When can we say that something is wide or narrow? In order to say so, we require some norms. The norm is set by the object that is being described. For example, a stripe in a shirt may be considered to be very wide when it is only two inches wide. But to call a road wide, it has to be several metres wide. This accounts for the apparent paradox of a small elephant being bigger than big mouse.

Non-gradable antonyms include pairs of words that do not have a gradability, We do not have expressions like alive – aliver – alivest. Examples of non-gradable antonyms include:

male	female
married	single
alive	dead

These items are complementary to each other. That is, when a person is married, it implies that he or she is not single. These antonyms are call non-gradable because it is not possible to use comparative or superlative degrees to say very dead or more dead. In these antonyms, no comparative and superlative degrees are possible. Besides, intermediate terms showing gradation do not exist with such category of adjectives.

The antonyms that are classified as relational opposites are found with pairs like husband-wife, buy-sell, parent-child and so on.

The kinship terms like father-mother, son-daughter, uncle-aunt, nephew-niece belong to this category. These terms in a pair are inter-dependent, one pre-supposes the other.

However, there are other antonyms too that show temporal relationships like ask-reply come-go, offer-accept etc. Their relationship is primarily binary and hence we can call them binary opposites. Examples include: employed-unemployed, rich-poor, alive –dead etc.

10.3.2 Synonymy

Synonymy in semantics refers to a major type of sense relation between lexical items. Lexical items that have the same meaning have been referred to as synonyms and the relationship between them is referred to as synonymy. For two lexical items to be synonyms, they should be identical in meaning. That is, they should be interchangeable in all contexts. Lyons (1996) identifies several categories of synonyms which he describes in terms of absolute synonymy, full-synonymy, total synonymy, complete synonymy, partial synonymy, near-synonymy and so on. He observes that absolute synonymy is extremely rare in natural languages. What we have is partial synonymy and near synonymy. He argues that the words referred to as synonyms do not exactly have the same meanings.

freedom	liberty
hide	conceal
broad	wide
beautiful	pretty
answer	reply
buy	purchase
foe	enemy
begin	commence

Professor Palmer (1983) holds a similar view that there is no real synonymy in English, that no two words have exactly the same

meaning. He argues that it would seem unlikely that two words with exactly the same meaning would have survived in a language. What a thesaurus lists as synonyms, may not be absolute or full synonyms. There are at least five different ways in which they can differ, thereby negating the idea that these words are synonyms in English.

The first principle is that if two words belong to two different dialects of the language, they cannot be called synonyms. The words 'autumn' and 'fall' refer to the third season of the English year. But, these two words cannot be called synonyms because they belong to two different dialects of English– American English and British English each of whose use is confined to its own speech communities.

The second principle is that if two words belong to two different registers, they are not synonyms. Thus, though smell, effluvium and stink have the same meaning, they belong to different registers or situational language use. A nasty smell in a formal register can be an obnoxious effluvium whereas in an informal register, it can be an 'orrible stink'. Hence, they are not synonyms.

Thirdly, the synonymy of words is dependent on its emotive meaning or evaluative meaning besides the cognitive meaning. Are politician and statesman synonymous? From a cognitive point of view politics and statesmanship are synonymous. But from the point of view of emotive and evaluative meaning, it is found that politician and statesman, hide and conceal, liberty and freedom have different meanings from the emotive and evaluative points of new.

Fourthly, for two words to be synonyms, they must not have collocational restrictions. Some words with the same meaning are collocationally restricted, that is, they occur in conjunction with other words. Palmer examines two words rancid and addled– both meaning spoilt. But they are not synonyms because while rancid collocates with butter and not with eggs or brains, addled collocates with eggs or brains but not with butter. We shall discuss collocation in a sub-unit of this unit.

Fifthly, those words which dictionaries of synonyms list as synonyms are not fully synonyms. Take synonyms like big, large, mature, ripe etc. and you will find that if they were synonyms, they could have been interchangeable. You can say, the boy has grown quite big, but you cannot use large in place of big.

By taking into account these principles, we can see the strength of the argument that there are no real synonyms in English, that no two words have exactly the same meaning. In other words, there is hardly any absolute synonymy in English. What we have is partial synonymy and near synonymy.

10.3.3 Homonymy and Polysemy

Homonymy in semantics refers to lexical items having the same form but differing in meaning. They are different words sharing the same form. Let us take the two meanings of bat: (1) winged mammal and (ii) implement for striking a ball.

These are not two different meanings of the word bat. On the contrary bat meaning a winged mammal is one word and bat meaning implement for striking a ball are two different words in English. They are absolute homonyms.

Lyons (1996) observes that absolute homonymy must satisfy the following three conditions:

(i) Their forms must be unrelated in meaning

(ii) All their forms must be identical and

(iii) Identical forms must be syntactically equivalent.

Absolute homonymy is common enough in the following groups of words:

(a) bank 1 : financial institution
bank 2 : side of a river

(b) sole 1 : bottom of foot or shoe
sole 2 : a kind of fish

(c) pen 1 : writing device
pen 2 : enclosure for keeping animals.

Such words that have the same form with the same pronunciation but are different words having different meaning are absolute homonymy.

But there are some homonyms that are called partial homonyms. For example, the word found meaning 'establish' and the word found as the past tense of find belong to this category of homonyms. They share the same form as illustrated below.

a)	Find (discover)	found	found	finding
	present tense	past	past part	Pres Part
b)	Found (establish)	founded	founded	founding
	present	past	Pre part	Pres part

The past tense form of find and the present tense form of found share the same form found but not in other tense forms. Now found as the past tense form of find is not syntactically equivalent to the present tense form of found (establish). They only satisfy the first condition their forms are unrelated in meaning. Hence, they are partial homonyms.

Whereas homonymy, either absolute or partial is a relation that holds two or more lexemes, polysemy—which means 'multiple meanings' is a property of single lexemes. The word plain can mean (i) clear (ii) unadorned (iii) obvious etc. Plain is a polyseme having a range of different meanings. The difference between the two can be shown thus :

- Homonymy is a case of two or more different words having different meanings and sharing the same form.
- Polyseme is a case of single lexical item having multiple meanings.

But when we draw this distinction, we also recognize that the border line between homonymy and polysemy is sometimes fluid. It becomes difficult to ascertain whether what has been considered the same form of two or more different words (homonymy) can even be the same word (hence, the same form) with different meanings. It has been noted that there is a good deal of agreement among

native speakers as to what counts as homonymy. We can identify two criteria to draw a distinction between homonymy and polysemy as follow :

a) Closeness of the relationship between the meanings in question.

b) Etymology of the lexical items concerned.

Let us examine (a) above by taking the two meanings of bat: (i) winged mammal and (ii) implement for striking a ball. The relationship between the two meanings is very remote– in fact, there is no relation at all. Hence, this is a case of homonymy. i.e. bat to mean winged mammal and bat to mean implement for striking a ball' are two different words.

On the other hand, the word 'foot' to mean 'the end of the leg' and 'the bottom part of a mountain', 'the base' share a closeness of the relationship between the meanings in question. So, we cannot have foot-1 and foot-2. Foot is a single lexical item with several meanings.

The second feature etymology requires us to look at is the history of words. At different stages of its use, a word undergoes changes or modification in form and meaning and in the process it may adopt a form which is used in another lexical item e.g. bat-1 and bat-2. If you check the *Oxford Dictionary of English Etymology* edited by C.T. Onions (1966), you will find that bat1 and bat2 are entirely different words that had different forms at different times.

a) bat : a club, stout stick from Old English batt.

b) bat : a winged mammal from Middle English bakke.

10.3.4 Hyponymy

Hyponymy refers to the relationship between two words, in which the meaning of one of the words includes the meaning of the other word. If the meaning of one word includes the meaning of another word, the meaning relation between such words is known as hyponymy. Hyponymy involves the notion of inclusion in the sense

shown below:

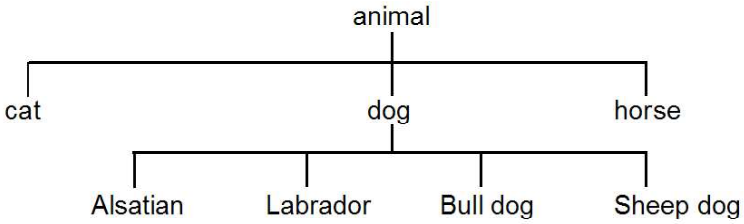
- marigold and rose are included in ‘flower’
- tiger and elephant are included in ‘animal’
- table and chair are included in ‘furniture’
- potatoes and cabbages are included in ‘vegetables’ etc.

Inclusion is thus, a matter of class membership. The upper term is the superordinate and the lower term is the hyponym. A few examples of hyponyms are cited below:’’

Superordinate terms	**hyponyms**
furniture	chair, table, bed
horse	mare, pony, colt
bird	sparrow, cuckoo, duck
colour	red, blue, green
fruit	apple, orange, mango
vegetable	carrot, cabbage, brinjal
transport	bus, train, car

The hyponyms of a superordinate term are called co-hyponyms. Thus, the meaning relation between chair, table, desk is the relation of co-hyponymy.

An interesting point about hyponyms is that very often the hyponym of a superordinate term can itself become a superordinate term.



The above description shows that the dog is the hyponym of animal but is the superordinate term for Alsatian, Labrador, etc.

So far, we have discussed antonymy, synonymy homonymy, polysemy and hyponymy. The relation of words with other words is often referred to as sense relation. Sense relation thus includes relations of antonymy, synonymy etc. They are distinguished from

reference which is the indication of relationship between a word and a concept or object in the external world.



CHECK YOUR PROGRESS

Q 1: Answer the following questions:

(a) What are function words? Give examples.

(b) What are gradable antonyms. Give examples.

(c) Read the sentence: "If two words belong to two different dialects of the language, they cannot be synonyms".

In the sentence, dialect means (choose the alternative)

i. a variety of a language e.g. British English/ American English/ Australian English.

ii. an undeveloped language

iii. a language that has no written form

(d) Register means. (Choose the correct alternative)

i. formal, semi-formal, informal use of language in different situations.

ii. regional variety of language

iii. social class variety of language

(e) Give the hyponyms of the following superordinate term

a) move b) game c) sports

d) tree e) dress

10.4 COLLOCATION RESTRICTION

Let us go back for a moment to Unit 9, to the section 9.4.4, wherein we discussed the term collocative meaning. We had stated that a word can acquire meaning under the collocative influence of the word which it co-occurs with. We can define collocation as the way words combine in a language to produce natural sounding speech and writing. In other words, we can say that the term collocation refers to the restrictions on how words can be used together. For example, in English we say strong wind but heavy

rain. It means that strong collocates with wind but not with rain. We do not say strong rain. Similarly, we see that heavy collocates with rain and not with wind as we do not say heavy wind.

The Oxford Dictionary of Collocations shows the types of word combinations that are possible in English. The word *light* for example, can be preceded by different adjectives, quantifiers, verbs etc.

- adjective + noun: *bright/harsh/intense/strong* light
- quantifier +noun (... of): a *beam/ray* of light
- verb + noun: *cast/emit/ give/ provide/ shed* light
- noun + verb: *light gleams/glows/ shines*

Collocation is essentially about the syntagmatic relationship that exists between lexemes.

We use the term syntagmatic relations to refer to the relations that hold among elements that can occur in combination with one another in well-formed syntagms. The term syntagm refers to a structurally significant combination of two or more units in a language. A syntagm may consist of collocationally restricted words in combination. For example: blond and hair, addled and brain, rancid and butter, are collocationally restricted words. That is, the use of the word blond collocates with or is restricted to hair; we cannot say a blond shirt or a blond car. Similarly, we say that high collocates with probability but not with chance.

(a) There is a high probability that he will get the job.

(b) There is a good chance that he will get the job.

We do not say high chance or good probability. Collocation restrictions allow only high probability and good chance.

10.5 SENTENCE MEANING

In our discussion on word meaning so far, we had noted that componential analysis is a technique for analyzing the meaning of lexical items or lexemes. There are other techniques for analyzing meaning too. We discovered that the meaning of a lexeme is determined by various other factors notably the antonymous, synonymous, hyponymous factors besides factors like collocation restrictions that hold between the lexeme and its

neighbours in the same lexical field or semantic field. The term 'lexical field' refers to the organization of related words and expressions into a system which shows their relationship to one another. For example, kinship terms like father, mother, brother, sister, uncle, aunt belong to a lexical field whose relevant features include generation, sex, membership of the father's or mother's side of the family and so on.

When we attempt to discuss sentence meaning there are various other factors to be considered. That is, there will be other sources of meaning. Let us consider a few of them. First, you will note that the major part of meaning of what we say and write is located in the words that we use. Let us consider the following pair of sentences:

a) Dilip likes to play tennis.

b) Dilip likes to play badminton.

We discover the meanings of the two sentences, rather in the differences of the two sentences from the two lexical items tennis and badminton. These two words contain the major part of the meaning of these two sentences. The meaning here is lexical.

Let us consider two other sentences:

a) Dilip is a teacher

b) Is Dilip a teacher?

We discover the meaning of the two sentences from a grammatical source. The first is a statement– an assertive sentence, while the second one is a straightforward yes no type question– an interrogative sentence. We discovered the meaning from grammar.

Here are two other sentences/utterances.

a) Adity is a teacher.

b) Adity is a teacher?

The source of meaning of these two sentences is intonation. The first sentence is uttered in a falling tone in the nucleus while the second sentence is uttered with a rising tone in the nucleus. The intonation decides the meaning.

Sentences, in order to fulfil the norm of being sentences, have to be grammatical. We have seen from the above discussion that grammar is a

major source of sentence meaning. Sentences can be either meaningful (semantically well-formed) or meaningless (semantically ill-formed). Utterances in our speech, says Lyons (1996 p. 135) may be either grammatical a ungrammatical, Lyons gives these two examples

a) I want him to come.

b) want that he come.

while the first is a grammatical sentence, the second is ungrammatical. Though it is ungrammatical, it is not difficult to deduce the meaning of the sentence : it can be translated into another language which would also be applicable for the correct version too.

But, sometimes grammatically well-formed sentences may not be meaningful at all. Let us examine these sentences :

a) Colourless green ideas sleep furiously (Chomsky)

b) The blue cows were smoking brown bananas.*

(*N. Krishnaswami, in one of his very hilarious linguistics classes at CIEEL which the writer attended.)

They are grammatically correct sentences. But they are semantically ill-formed. We have to go back to explore some of the theories of meaning in the next section which will help us to account for the meaning of sentences.

10.6 THEORIES OF SEMANTICS

In this section, attempt will be made to introduce you to some of the theories of semantics that can account for the meaning of sentences. While merely a brief introduction is given to the first three theories here two others are given slightly detailed treatment in the sub-sections that follow.

1. **The Referential Theory**: Also called denotational theory, the theory implies that meanings of certain words can be defined by identifying or making a reference to the item or idea that the lexeme stands for. For example, the reference to the lexeme ‘dog’ always denotes the same class of animal whereas ‘the dog’ and ‘my dog’ refer to different members of the class on different occasions of utterance. But the lexeme is also related to other lexemes– ‘the co-hyponemes of the superordinate term dog’.

2. **The Ideational Theory**: Also called the mentalistic theory, the theory implies that the meaning of a lexeme or an expression is the idea or concept associated with it in the mind of a person who knows the expression. There is no direct link between the lexeme and the 'concept' that the lexeme stands for. The idea links the lexeme and the concept.
3. **The Behaviourist Theory:** The theory developed by Bloomfield (1933) holds the view that the meaning of an expression is either the stimulus that evokes it or the response that it evokes, or a combination of both, on particular occasions of utterance. He observes that we can deduce the meaning of an utterance by observing the events that accompany it.

10.6.1 The Verificationist Theory

The verificationist theory of meaning or 'verificationism' for short, as the name suggests, has to do with truth. The theory implies that the meaning of a sentence/utterance can be determined by its verificability in term of its propositions. The term proposition refers to the basic meaning which a sentence expresses. Propositions consist of

a) something which is named or talked about (known as the argument, or entity)

b) an assertion or predication which is made about the argument.

A sentence may express or presuppose more than one proposition. Let us closely look at this sentence:

Dilip's friend Raja, who is an engineer, plays tennis.

The sentence contains the following propositions:

- Dilip has a friend
- The name of that friend is Raja
- Raja is an engineer
- Raja plays tennis.

The meaning of a sentence can be deduced from pre suppositions as well. Here is an exchange between two speakers, A and B:

Speaker A : What about inviting Deepak tonight?

Speaker B : What a good idea; then he can give Disha a lift.

Here the pre suppositions are amongst others, that

- Speakers A and B know who Deepak and Disha are
- Deepak has a car.
- Speakers A and B are planning some party on that night.

Thus, the propositions contribute to the meaning of the sentence.

10.6.2 The Truth Conditional Theory

The truth conditional theory of meaning implies that to know the meaning of a sentence is to know the conditions under which the sentence is true or false of the situation, or state of the world that it purports to describe. The theory works by giving an account of the meaning of a sentence by specifying the conditions under which it would be true or false of the situation. In other words, we say that to know the meaning of a sentence is to know the conditions under which it would be true or false. Let us take an example to see how this theory operates.

a) Krishna is a bachelor.

To get the meaning of this sentence we must look at

(i) the truth value of the sentence and (ii) its truth conditions.

- The notion of truth value implies that a sentence is either true or false.
- The notion of truth condition implies a precisely specifiable account of the conditions which determine the truth value of the propositions conveyed by the sentence.

Getting back to the marital status of Krishna, on the basis of presuppositions, we can state that

b) Krishna is not married

Or even

c) Krishna in unmarried.

Both the sentences (b) and (c) have the same truth condition as (a) above. If they have the same truth conditions, we say that

they have the same propositional content.

On close scrutiny we discover that sentence (a) Krishna is a bachelor differs from (b) and (c) from the point of truth condition. The notable point is that not every unmarried individual is a bachelor. For example, an unmarried woman is not a bachelor. The theory thus indicates that it is not easy to decide whether two expressions are necessarily true or of the same class of entitles. There grows the necessity of specifying the conditions under which a sentence would be true or false.



10.7 LET US SUM UP

A continuation of unit 9 of this Block, we began this unit by further exploring the elements of meaning with a distinction between lexical meaning of words and their grammatical meanings. Next, we moved on to different meaning relations that exist in relation to different words in terms of antonymy, synonymy, homonymy, polysemy and hyponymy. We discussed antonymy in terms of their gradability (big—small), non-gradability (male — female), relational oppositeness (buy — sell) and binary oppositeness (single —married). We discussed synonymy in terms of absolute synonymy (which is rare in English), partial synonymy (big — large) and near synonymy (handsome—pretty) etc. We also discussed homonymy in terms of absolute homonymy (lead: the name of a metal – lead: show the way) and partial homonymy and contrasted homonymy with polysemy which refers to a case of a single lexical item having multiple meanings. Then we moved to hyponymy, which refers to the inclusion of word in a lexical set. Next we discussed collocation restriction of words, how some words do not collocate with some words and vice versa. Next, we took up sentence meaning, which is basically the sum of the meaning of the words and other constituents that compose it. We noted how a change of a word in a sentence can affect the sentence meaning. Lastly, we briefly discussed a few theories of semantics that can account for the meaningfulness of sentences. We took up for

discussion the verification theory of meaning and the truth conditional theory of meaning, both related to sentence meaning.



10.8 FURTHER READING

1) Bloomfield, Leonard. (1988). *Language* New Delhi: Motilal Banarsidas, pp 139-157.
2) Leech, Geoffrey. (1981). *Semantics* Penguin.
3) Lyons, John. (1996). *Linguistics Semantics* Cambridge University Press.
4) ———— (1977). *Semantics* (Vols I & II) Cambridge University Press
5) Palmar, Frank (1983). *Semantics* Cambridge University Press.
6) Syal, P. & Jindal D. V. (1999). *An Introduction to Linguistics* Prentice Hall, India.
7) Yule, George. (2006). *The Study of Language*. Cambridge University Press 100-111.



10.9 ANSWERS TO CHECK YOUR PROGRESS (HINTS ONLY)

Ans to Q 1:

Refer to 9.5 and try yourself.

(a) Refer to 10.5.1.

(b) A

(c) A

(d)
move	:	walk, run, shift
game	:	football, hockey, tennis
sport	:	swimming, boxing, jumping
tree	:	oak, sal, neem
dress	:	sari, suit, gown



10.10 POSSIBLE QUESTIONS

Q 1: Give brief answers to the following questions:

(a) Define gradable antonyms with two examples.

(b) Define non-gradable antonyms with two examples.

(c) Define the term homonym with an example.

(d) Explain the term polysemy with an example.

(e) Define collocation restriction.

Q 2: Answer the following questions.

(a) Explain the term hyponomy by providing examples.

(b) Give the appropriate collocation in the blanks of the following sentences.

(i) The doctor _____ the operation.

(ii) The committee _____ a discussion.

Q 3: Answer the following questions.

(a) “It can however be maintained that there are no synonyms in English”. Discuss the statement.

(b) Write a note on verificationist theory of semantics.

(c) Discuss how the truth conditional theory works.

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UNIT 11: SOCIOLINGUISTICS I

UNIT STRUCTURE

11.1 Learning Objectives

11.2 Introduction

11.3 Scope and Areas of Investigation

11.4 Language and Society

11.5 Speech Community

11.6 Dialects and Idiolects

11.7 Regional Dialects and Isoglosses

11.8 Social Dialect

11.9 Register and Style

11.10 Code Switching and Code Mixing

11.11 Let us Sum up

11.12 Further Reading

11.13 Answers to Check Your Progress (Hints Only)

11.14 Possible Questions

11.1 LEARNING OBJECTIVES

After going through this unit, you will be able to

- understand the scope and areas of sociolinguistics
- appreciate the significant relationship of language and society
- distinguish regional and social dialect and register
- appreciate code switching and code mixing.

11.2 INTRODUCTION

This is the first unit of Block 3 of the Course on Language, Linguistics and Grammar. In this unit, we propose to introduce you the field of sociolinguistics, which is a branch of linguistics as a study of all aspects of the relationship between language and society. We began this unit with the scope and areas of sociolinguistics. We noted that the scope of sociolinguistics includes various issues in relation to language in society

notably studies on speech communities, investigations on the concepts of dialects and idiolects, studies on dialects, registers, code-switching and code mixing. We next shall move into the areas of language and society exploring areas of the use of language in society in terms of the ideational function of language. It means organizing the speaker's or writer's experience of the real or imaginary world. Then we took up the interpersonal function of language, that is, indicating, establishing or maintaining social relationships between people, and then the textual functions like creating written or spoken texts. Besides, we discussed the emotive use of language, language used for social interaction, language as instrument of identity and language as instrument of thought. Next, we shall examine a few definitions of speech community and drew conclusions on the factors that constitute the formation of speech communities. Other areas of our concern taken up for discussion include a discussion on regional and social dialects, register and style besides code switching and code mixing.

11.3 SCOPE AND AREAS OF INVESTIGATION

We define sociolinguistics as a branch of linguistics that is concerned with the study of language in relation to society. The word *society* is indeed very wide. It encompasses a range of social factors that include social class, educational level and type of education, and a host of other things. It is important to state that though the growth of the subject took place in the 1960s, the field of studies that it represents is much older. There exists a long tradition in the study of dialects and the general study of the relation between language and culture. What sociolinguistics has done is to throw much light both on the nature of language and on the nature of society.

It is also important to state that sociolinguistics is partly empirical and partly theoretical. On the one hand, it is a matter of going out and amassing bodies of facts of language in society and to analyse them scientifically. It allows the beginning of an analytical framework to be worked out. On the other hand, there is the factor of the investigators' personal experiences on language in relation to society. However, simply reliance of personal experiences on language may not provide accurate ideas on a language.

Field studies often form the basis of investigation in sociolinguistics. It is the analytical and empirical approach to the data that has been the mainstay of the subject.

The scope of sociolinguistics includes various issues in relation to language in society. Some of these issues include:

- Studies on speech communities in terms of language continuum.
- Investigations on the concepts of dialects and idiolects
- Studies on the standardization of languages in the world.
- Study of regional dialects and social dialects
- Studies of registers showing how situations also govern the use of language besides region and class.
- Studies featuring of code switching and code mixing in bilingual communities.
- Studies on bilingualism and multilingualism.
- Studies on language planning.
- Studies on verbal and non-verbal behaviour of speech communities.
- Studies in relation to culture and thought.

The above list is indicative of the range of sociolinguistics. As a branch of Linguistics, we note that there are other branches that also relate to society, especially to the area of culture. Two such branches are Ethno-linguistics and Anthropological Linguistics. It needs to be clarified whether these branches overlap or they are distinctive areas for the study of language.

Ethno-linguistics is the study of language in relation to the life and culture of a society or ethnic group especially by personal observation. The concept implies that language is not studied in isolation but within a social and/or cultural setting. One of the parameters of ethno-linguistics is the study of the ethnography of communication: how people actually use language in various cultures.

On the other hand, Anthropological Linguistics studies the relationship between language and culture in a community, notably, its traditions, beliefs and family structures within a language community. Anthropological Linguistics studies the ways in which relationships within

the family are expressed in different cultures. With a focus on kinship terminology and they have studied how people communicate with one another at certain social and cultural events. At times, these concepts nearly overlap with ethnolinguistics and sociolinguistics.

Another field of study is Sociology of Language, which is the study of language varieties and their users within a social framework. The study of language choice in bilingual or multilingual situations, language planning, language maintenance and language shift are areas of concern of Sociology of Language. Sociology of Language can well be considered a part of sociolinguistics if not an extension of the subject.



CHECK YOUR PROGRESS

Q 1: Briefly answer the following questions

(a) Write a short note on ethno-linguistics.

(b) Define anthropological linguistics.

(c) Briefly relate the concerns of 'sociology of language'.

11.4 LANGUAGE AND SOCIETY

Sociolinguistics concerns itself with studies on all aspects of the relationship between language and society. One of the major aspects of the relationship between language and society is the function of language in society. The British linguist M. A. K. Halliday (1978) considers language as having three main functions: ideational, interpersonal and textual.

(a) The ideational function of language refers to organizing the speaker's or writer's experience of the real or imaginary world, i.e. language refers to real or imagined persons, things, actions events, states, etc.

(b) The interpersonal function of language refers to indicating, establishing or maintaining social relationships between people. It includes forms of address, speech functions like identifying, describing and reporting things, providing information, expressing opinions and decisions, getting people to do things, making offers, acceptance and refusal, expressing feelings and expressing our rights and wrongs.

(c) The textual functions refer to creating written or spoken texts which

cohere within themselves and which fit in the particular situation in which they are used.

In addition, here we can refer to other uses of language. A few of them have been discussed here.

11.4.1 Emotive use of Language

One of the major functions of language is emotional expression. Let us take a situation: a person trying to kick start his bike. He tries several times to do so and fails. He curses himself: "Oh Hell!" Here he is using language not exactly to communicate his feelings to someone else but to get rid of the annoyance that is building up in his mind with each try. We can call it the expressive and emotive function of language. The most common linguistic expressions of emotion consists of conventional words like My God!, Oh!, Wow!, Ow!, Ouch! and so on. These expressions may be language and culture specific. But there are many emotive utterances of a positive kind, such as our involuntary verbal reactions to beautiful art or scenery, our expression of fear and affection, and the emotional outpourings of certain kinds of poetry. All these exemplify our emotive use of language.

11.4.2 Language used for Social Interaction

When two persons meet, it is customary to greet one another with a "Hello!" they exchange pleasantries. Thereby, they are seen to be performing a social function of language. It is a function, which arises out of the basic human need to signal friendship–or at least, lack of enmity. For someone to withhold these utterances when they are expected, by remaining silent, it is a sign of distance and alienation.

This language function for social interaction applies to English as well as to quite a number of Indian languages. In fact, if one does not use these pleasantries, there is the likelihood of considering the person to be proud or even uncivilized. However, there are

evidences that these social communications, also called phatic communications are far from being universal; some cultures say little and prefer silence.

11.4.3 Language as Instrument of Identity

An important social function of language is the expression of identity. Many social situations display language, which unites rather than informs – the chanting of a crowd at a football match, the shouting of names or slogans at public meetings, the shouts of affirmations at some meetings are all examples of the use of language as expression of identity. Our use of language can tell our listener or reader a great deal about ourselves – in particular about our religious origins, social background, geographical area we come from, the level of our education, our occupation and personality. In other words, they signal our identity.

11.4.4 Language as Instrument of thought

It seems evident that there is a close relation between language and thought. Everyday experiences suggest that much of our thinking is facilitated by language. The thinking, which seems to involve language, is of a different kind. This is the reasoned thinking, which takes place as we work our problems, tell stories, plan strategies and so on it has been called rational, directed, logical or propositional thinking. Language seems to be very important for this kind of thinking.



CHECK YOUR PROGRESS

Q 2: Answer the following questions.

(a) Define 'ideational function of language'.

(b) Give an example of an interpersonal function of language.

(c) Briefly explain 'textual function of language'.

(d) Give two examples of 'emotive use of language'.

11.5 SPEECH COMMUNITY

The term 'speech community' is used to refer to the members of a social group who claim a variety of a language as their own. John Lyons defines speech community as "all the people who use a given language (or dialect)". According to this definition, members of speech communities maintain the distinctiveness of that variety from varieties spoken by their neighbours.

Charles Hockett defines speech community by stating that each language defines its speech community, the whole set of people who communicate with each other either directly or indirectly, via the common language. The definition refers to any regionally or socially definable group of speakers of a common language system or dialect as a speech community.

Any population, whether of a city, village or whole state, may be expected to contain a very large number of speakers of a language with overlapping language and overlapping language systems and other social characteristics. It should be noted that the groups or communities are those that the individual speaker perceives to exist. Each individual creates the group for his/her verbal behaviour so that they shall resemble those of the group or groups with which he/she may like to be identified.

R.A. Hudson, in his observation on speech community, rightly observes that to be a language community we need more than a common language. It is hard to imagine that having nothing but the commonest language or dialect to set them off from their people – nothing in their culture, nothing to do with their history can make a speech community. As soon as the factor of interaction comes in, there will be other shared characteristics like our culture, our social behaviour etc. in addition to the interaction. These parameters need to be taken into account in the formation of a speech community.

11.6 DIALECTS AND IDIOLECTS

The term 'dialect' can be better explained by referring to its

relationship with the term language. The term dialect has generally been used to refer to a subordinate variety of a language. For example, we are used to saying that the English language has many dialects. We know that English, Dutch, French, Hindi etc. are all different languages characterized by a distinct phonology, morphology, syntax and semantics. It follows from this description that as a general case there is hardly any mutual intelligibility between languages unless one actually learns the language.

On the other hand, a dialect is a regionally or socially distinct variety of a language. Being dialects of the same language, it is possible that the speakers of one dialect of English will be fairly intelligible to the speakers of a different dialect of the language. These dialects have grown out of the same language and may therefore have some shared characteristic features that contribute to mutual intelligibility.

However, it is not always a general case that two different language speakers are mutually unintelligible. On the contrary, speakers of two distinct languages sharing a common political border may tend to be mutually intelligible. The eminent sociolinguist Peter Trudgill observes from one of his studies that Dutch and German are known to be two distinct languages. However, at some places at the Dutch - German frontier, there is a high degree of mutual intelligibility among the different speakers.

In a discussion on dialect, the concept of idiolect needs to be considered. It is a term used in sociolinguistics to refer to the linguistic system of an individual speaker. No two speakers have the same language, because no two speakers have the same experience of language. The difference between speakers may vary from very slight and trivial to total difference within whatever limits are set by universal characteristics of language. An individual speaker is moulded by his exposure to experience to use language. Since such exposure to experience may vary in individuals, it is obvious that every individual will develop some distinctive features that are exclusive to individuals. These distinctive feature termed as idiolect constitutes individual speech habits as displayed in a particular variety of a language at a given time.

It is a fact that sociolinguistics is about language in relation to society.

Society consists of individuals; sociolinguistics agrees that it is essential to keep individuals firmly in the centre of interests. The individual speaker is important in order to arrive at the notions of a dialect used in a particular speech community that would ultimately lead them to chart dialect maps or atlases.

Indeed, the idiolect is the primary focus of the sociolinguist. His work is based on observations of individuals using language and analyses of those observations. Unlike for example, philosophical claims, sociolinguistic claims do not result entirely from mental speculation. On the contrary, they result from the observation of the individual speaker's idiolect. To ensure that their observation is reliable, sociolinguists follow certain field techniques for collecting data that they and others could then use to arrive at conclusions about languages and dialects. The data is invariably the different perspectives of an individual's idiolect.

Such researchers are more specifically known as dialectologists. One of the tasks of the dialectologists is to study the idiolects of different individuals in order to identify a linguistic system operating in the idiolects of these individuals. These studies are carried out in different ways. For example, the core field technique in descriptive linguistics is "elicitation". Researchers collect and transcribe short utterances that illustrate linguistic features relevant to an analysis of some part of the linguistic system. They apply analytical methods, which in structural linguistics are often called "discovery procedures". Thus, through various techniques the idiolects are studied and analysed for arriving at various answers to linguistic questions of a given speech community.



CHECK YOUR PROGRESS

Q 3: Answer the following questions

(a) Briefly distinguish between dialect and language.

(b) Define 'idiolect'.

(c) Explain the function of dialectologists.

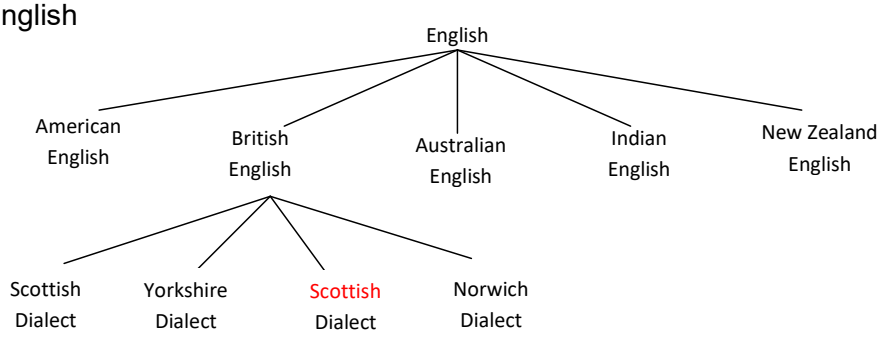
(d) Briefly explain the term 'discovery procedure'

11.7 REGIONAL DIALECTS AND ISOGLOSS

When the speakers of a language, for example, English, are spread out over a large geographical area, in due course these speakers may make use of certain distinctive linguistic features at the levels of phonology, morphology, syntax and semantics that distinguish their language variety from another variety of the same language. At the same time, their language varieties do not make one group of language speakers incomprehensible to other language groups. These language varieties are dialects of the language. They are called regional dialects of English or regional varieties of English.

American English, British English, Australian English, New Zealand English are all regional varieties of English or regional dialects. Again, even within British English there exists a number of regionally distinct dialects notably Scottish dialect, Yorkshire dialect, Norwich dialect and so on. The above account shows that there is no basic difference between a language and its regional varieties except for the fact that the regional varieties have undergone some modifications in their own ways in course of time to fit their new surroundings. A mutual comprehensibility of their dialects exists among different speakers. This information can be represented diagrammatically as follows:

English



It is possible to continue such a tree downwards, revealing smaller and smaller varieties, until one comes to the level of the individual speaker – the idiolect. That is hardly necessary. What seems obvious is to identify what are called regional dialects within the larger variety of its language.

One of the primary areas of concern of dialectologists is to study

the distinctive features of a particular regional dialect. Dialectologists study the linguistic features of dialects with a view to demarcating the geographical area where a dialect is used. They plot dialect maps and not unlike our geographical maps that show state or district or sub-division boundaries, dialectologists make boundaries as to where Dialect A ends and where Dialect B begins. This dialect boundary is called *isogloss* that the dialectologist draws on a dialect map.



CHECK YOUR PROGRESS

Q 4: Answer the following questions

(a) Explain the term 'regional dialect'.

(b) Give four examples of regional dialects of English.

(c) Name the term used to refer to a dialect boundary in a dialect map.

11.8 SOCIAL DIALECT

The term 'social dialect' is used to refer to the dialectical variations that take place in a speech community. Dialect differences are not only regional as has been shown so far. Region or geography is one of the relevant factors, the other being social class. Dialectologists therefore speak of social dialects or sociolects to refer to non regional dialects. One of the characteristics of a hierarchical social structure of a country like Britain is that social class takes precedence over geography as a determinant of speech. As a result, there are far more dialectical variations among people in the lower social classes than among those belonging to the upper classes of the society. Speakers of the upper class because of their public school upbringing among others have been able to free themselves from the linguistic variations that are not distinctly marked among working class speakers of English.

Hudson (p 42) observes that pronunciation seems to be a distinguishing factor between regional and social dialects. This allows us to distinguish between the standard dialect and the non-standard dialect, while making statements about pronunciation in terms of accents. As a general

case, it is accepted that the dialect that is used by the upper class, has become the prestige variety of dialect. Even the pronunciation has been labelled as RP, though it needs to be classified that RP is a variety of pronunciation that is free from the regional variations



CHECK YOUR PROGRESS

Q 5: Answer the following questions.

(a) Explain the term 'sociolect'.

(b) Explain the concept of RP.

11.9 REGISTER AND STYLE

The term 'register' is widely used in sociolinguistics to refer to the varieties of language determined according to use. This feature distinguishes registers from dialects. While dialects are variations governed by regional or social differences, registers are variations governed by uses and involves consideration of the following parameters:

(a) the subject-matter or topic, which we refer to as the field of discourse

(b) the purpose, the mode used for the exchange, such as the spoken medium or the written medium, which we refer to as the mode of discourse.

(c) the formality of the message governed by the relationship of the participants of the exchange, which we refer to as the style of discourse.

11.9.1 Field of Discourse

The term 'field of discourse' refers to the variation of register that is determined by the subject matter and distinctiveness in the style. For example,

(a) Two lawyers working on a legal matter use the language of legal briefs while drafting a legal document. Their variety of language in terms of its vocabulary and syntax reflects a register distinctive to their profession and the topic under discussion. This variety goes by the term 'register of law'.

(b) A newspaper reporter drafts a news story while reporting an event by using a distinct variety of language: “Two CRPF jawans and a civilian driver were killed when suspected militants triggered an explosion of an improvised explosive device at Bhalukjuli at Goalpara district at 10.30 am today. The jawans have been identified as...” The reporter uses the register of journalism.

(c) If we hear words such as “Our Father who art in Heaven, hallowed be thy Name, thy Kingdom come, thy will be done on Earth as it is in Heaven...” we find ourselves in yet another distinct language use. This variety of language use goes by the term: register of religion.

(d) Similarly, when we read something such as: “I was born in the city of Bombay...once upon a time. No, that won’t do, there’s no getting away from the date. I was born in Doctor Narlikar’s Nursing Home on August 15th, 1947. And the time? The time matters too”, we recognize the register of literature.

(e) Now, we shall read the following extract from another book: “Let us cool the liquid still further and watch it solidify, still at the same magnification as before. As we abstract more heat the molecules, moving ever more slowly, are pulled closer together, and the liquid contracts...” Here we have yet another variety of language use. This is the register of science and technology.

Similarly, we can refer to the register of business communication, the register of sports commentaries and many other diverse fields of discourse. The value of such specific varieties of the language use is that now it has been increasingly realized that language at the higher levels of education has to be taught for a clearly specific or utilitarian purpose. The purpose is usually defined with reference to some occupational requirement by analysing the features of the language in terms of distinct fields. Specialised language learners require English as a means of furthering their

specialist education, or as a means of performing a social or working role as a scientist, a journalist, a fiction writer and so on, efficiently.

11.9.2 Mode of Discourse

The word “mode” refers to either the spoken or the written mode. Depending upon the mode, there would be a striking variation in the use of language. From the point of production, it is obvious that spoken and written modes of presentation of language make somewhat different demands on language producers. The syntax of spoken discourse is typically much less structured than that of written language. The text of written discourse is characterised by cohesion or unity and coherence or logical development produced by the use of covert and overt connectives.

11.9.3 The Style of Discourse

The style of discourse refers to variations in the language that are determined by the relationship between the participants of the discourse – either spoken or written. The style used can be distinguished in terms of the levels of formality namely, formal, semi-formal and informal. The choices for their use are determined from the situation and the relationship between the participants of the spoken/written discourse.

At one extreme of language use is formal speech, the kind of speech one hears when a speaker inaugurates a conference or a national or international literary seminar. One can even hear one of the organizers guiding the participants to the conference hall in very formal directive language: “Participants are requested to enter by way of the door marked A.”

At the other extreme is casual speech, which is the kind of speech we use to our family and friends in everyday interactions. In between these two extremes, there is the semi-formal use of language which happens to be the most natural variety of language used in work places, markets and so on.



CHECK YOUR PROGRESS

Q 6: Answer the following questions.

(a) Explain one of the distinctive fields of discourse.

(b) Give an example of a piece of discourse that comes under formal style.

11.10 CODE SWITCHING AND CODE MIXING

The word 'code' is used in linguistics to refer to a system of communication involving language. The terms 'code switching' and 'code mixing' are used in linguistics to refer to the linguistic behaviour of people in bilingual and multilingual speech communities. Members of a speech community speaking more than one language chooses between them according to circumstances as in case of educated speakers of India who are bilinguals and multilinguals. Depending upon circumstances, speakers may choose to switch from one language to another or mix languages in between the speech art. The terms 'code switching' and 'code mixing' are used in this context to mean the mutual intelligibility of a particular language between individuals or linguistic groups in a bilingual or multilingual setting.

11.10.1 Code Switching

Code switching is the inevitable consequence of bilingualism or more generally multilingualism. Bi/multilingual communities use different languages for different situations. For example, one language is reserved exclusively for use at home and another for use in the wider communities. More precisely, this type of code switching is called situational code switching because the switches between languages always coincides with changes from one external situation to another. The choice of language is controlled by rules, which members of the speech community learn from their experiences. These rules are part of their total linguistic knowledge.

Code switching is largely determined by the situation that prompts speakers to make a choice of language from the number of languages used by the members of speech community. A child has his/her mother tongue in the home situation but in formal situations like a school (if it is an English medium school); he/she may switch on to English. Again, when he is in the playground in the company of a mixed group of pupils, he makes a choice between his mother tongue and school language or the mother tongue of his friends, which may be different from his own.

There could be a number of factors to lead speakers to switch codes. A few of them have been briefly taken up here:

a) *The social factor*: This factor aims at expressing solidarity with a social group. When a speaker of a dominant language switches on to the less dominant language of the listener, the reason underlying this switch is to express solidarity with the less dominant language used.

b) *Attitudinal factor*: In social interactions, code switching is a very helpful means to study the speaker's attitude towards the listener. When a speaker switches codes, it is obvious that the person is transmitting a signal to the listener as to whether his or her attitude towards the listener is friendly, irritating, distant, ironical, jocular and so on.

c) *Linguistic factor:* When speakers cannot express themselves adequately in one language, they switch to another language to make good the deficiency. Often a speaker, for the sake of expressing solidarity to a linguistic group may like to use the language of the linguistic group over which his command may not be adequate. In that case, after a while the speaker switches codes.

d) *Classroom interaction strategies*: In English L2 classrooms, it is natural for the teacher to switch codes especially in bilingual/ multilingual situations. The teacher switches codes entirely for his/her purpose to obtain feedback on his/her classroom

performance among other things. Bilingualism can be a very useful classroom strategy for remedial teaching and in handling underachieving classrooms.

11.10.2 Code-mixing

Code mixing is different from code switching which may take on several factors.

a) A long narrative may switch from one language to another somewhere in the middle of a narration. This case often happens when the speaker becomes aware of the mood of the listeners.

b) Sentences may alternate; a sentence may begin in one language and finish in another as typically seen in the use of language by TV anchors and talk shows. Code mixing in this case occurs to create a climate of informality.

c) Phrases from both languages may succeed each other in apparently random order though in fact, grammatical constraints are frequently involved.

Such linguistic behaviour, which is common in bilingual/ multilingual speakers, is covered by the term code mixing.

Switching among mono-linguals

Code switching is an area, which is inaccessible to monolingual speakers, in order to express attitudes like friendliness, irritation, distance, irony, jocularity, etc. the monolingual speaker takes recourse to register switching.



11.11 LET US SUM UP

In this unit, we introduced you the field of sociolinguistics, a branch of linguistics that is a study of all aspects of the relationship between language and society. These are the concepts that we had taken up for discussion in this unit. First, we discussed the scope and areas of

sociolinguistics, which includes studies on speech communities, investigations on the concepts of dialects and idiolects, studies on dialects, registers, code switching and code mixing. We next went on to explore the use of language in society in terms of the ideational function of language i.e. organizing the speaker's or writer's experience of the real or imaginary world; the interpersonal function of language i.e. indicating, establishing or maintaining social relationships between people; the textual functions i.e. creating written or spoken texts which cohere within themselves and which fit in the particular situation in which they are used. We also discussed the emotive use of language, language used for social interaction, language as instrument of identity and language as instrument of thought. Next, we examined a few definitions of speech community and drew conclusions on the factors that constitute the formation of speech communities. Other areas of our concern taken up for discussion include a discussion on dialects which include both regional and social dialects, register and style and a discussion on code-switching and code-mixing with which we concluded the discussion on the unit.



11.12 FURTHER READING

1) Crystal, David. (1987). *The Cambridge Encyclopaedia of Language.* Cambridge.
2) Hudson, R.A. (1999). *Sociolinguistics*. Cambridge.
3) Lyons, John. (2002). *Language and Linguistics.* Cambridge.
4) Trudgill, Peter. (1984). *Sociolinguistics*. Penguin.



11.13 ANSWERS TO CHECK YOUR PROGRESS (HINTS ONLY)

Ans to Q 1: (a), (b) and (c): see 11.3.

Ans to Q 2: (a) see 11.4

(b) Making requests: Could you show me the way to Women's College?

(c) see 11.4

(d) (i) Oh my God!, (ii) Good Lord!

Ans to Q 3: (a), (b) and (c): see 11.6

(d) The term "discovery procedure' refers to a set of techniques which can be automatically or mechanically applied to a sample of language and which will produce a correct grammatical analysis.

Ans to Q 4: (a), (b), and (c): see 11.7.

(d) isogloss

Ans to Q 5: (a) Sociolect is a synonym of social dialect. (For social dialect see 11.8.

(b) The term RP refers to "Received Pronunciation", a term used to mean the type of British Standard English pronunciation which has been regarded as the prestige variety and which shows no regional variations. The word 'received' in this label imply social acceptance.

Ans to Q 6: (a) The field of journalism is an example of a field of discourse. A news story written for the purpose of reporting an event makes use of the style of discourse that belongs to the register of journalistic writing.

(b) A letter written to a higher authority makes use of a formal style.



11.14 POSSIBLE QUESTIONS

Q 1: Give brief answers to the following questions:

(a) Define the term 'ethno-linguistics'.

(b) How is sociolinguistics related to sociology of language?

(c) Give an example of an emotive use of language.

(d) Briefly explain isogloss.

Q 2: Write short notes on:

(a) Speech community

(b) Idiolect

(c) Social dialect

(d) Style of discourse

Q 3: Answer the following questions:

(a) Discuss the scope of sociolinguistics.

(b) Write a note on regional dialect.

(c) Discuss the register variations in relation to the subject-matter or topic of discourse.

(d) Discuss the phenomenon of code-switching and code-mixing in multi-lingual communities.

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UNIT 12: SOCIOLINGUISTICS II

UNIT STRUCTURE

12.1 Learning Objectives

12.2 Introduction

12.3 Pidgin

12.4 Creole

12.5 Standard Language

12.6 Bilingualism and Multilingualism

12.7 Language Planning

12.8 Let us Sum up

12.9 Further Reading

12.10 Answers to Check Your Progress (Hints Only)

12.11 Possible Questions

12.1 LEARNING OBJECTIVES

After going through his unit, you will be able to

- appreciate the development of standard language from pidgin
- explain the concepts of bilingualism and multilingualism
- appreciate the language issue in multilingual situations
- formulate ideas on language planning.

12.2 INTRODUCTION

This is the second unit on sociolinguistics wherein we have taken up a number of issues on language in society beginning with the concept of pidgin. We discussed pidgin as a system of communication that has grown up among people who do not share a common language but who want to talk to each other for trading and other specific reasons. We drew examples of pidgins have been used in Ghana and in some other parts of the world. Then, we discussed the concept of creole in relation to a pidgin. We differentiated between the two by stating that a creole becomes the mother tongue of a community but not a pidgin and hold the view that pidgins and

creoles are two stages in a single process of linguistic development. At the first stage, increasing number of people begin to use pidgin as a principal means of communication. Next, as their children hear it more than many other languages, the pidgin gradually becomes creolized and takes on the status of a mother tongue for them. We discussed how creole has become the mother tongue of many countries.

Next, we discussed the concept of 'Standard Language' or 'Standard dialect' in the context of the other regional dialects that are being used by the members of a speech community by stating that while theoretically all the dialects of language have the status of being the language of the members of a speech community, it is only one of the dialects that attain the status of a standard and acceptability in a speech community. We next moved on to bilingualism to discuss the use of two languages either by an individual who is a bilingual, or by a group of speakers, such as the inhabitants of a particular region or a nation. In everyday use, the word bilingual usually means a person who speaks, reads, or understands two languages equally well. We discussed the Canada bilingual situation and different bilingual educational programmes. Then we discussed a number of issues on *multilingualism* by referring to a language situation in a country in which three or more languages are used by a speech community whose individual speakers are referred to as multilinguals we discussed the multilingual situation of India, the three language formula and the observations of NCF 205 on the multilingual character of India.

With a multiplicity of languages spoken within the country, we have shown in the last section how it becomes necessary to choose a single language as a norm for official, educational or other purposes. Decisions are to be made regarding the status of a language over others, which language should be the school language and so on. It is in this context, we referred to the three-language formula, which we see as a major step towards language planning.

12.3 PIDGIN

A pidgin is a system of communication that has grown up among people who do not share a common language but who want to talk to each other for trading and other specific reasons. In other words, pidgins develop as a contact language when groups of people who speak different languages, come into contact and communicate with one another. Hence, pidgins have been variously called makeshift languages, marginal languages or mixed languages. However, compared to the languages, which have given rise to them, pidgins are characterised by the following features:

- They have a reduced grammatical structure,
- a limited set of vocabulary items, and
- a much narrower range of communicative functions.

Pidgins are generally the native language of no one, but they are nonetheless a major medium of communication among people speaking different languages. The process by which a pidgin develops when two distinct language communities come together is known as the pidginization process.

Pidgins are demonstratively creative adaptations of natural languages with a structure and a set of rules of their own. Along with creoles, they are evidence of a fundamental process of linguistic change, as languages come into contact with each other, producing new varieties whose structures and uses contract and expand. They provide the clearest evidence of language being created and shaped by society for its own ends, as people adapt to new social environments.

To illustrate how pidgins make use of a reduced grammatical structure, the following samples of the pidgin used in Ghana are given:

a) The lady don't come to land.

b) The food is not chaw.

The above two sentences are examples of pidginized forms of the language. The meaning of the first sentence is that the lady has not arrived and the meaning of the second one is that the food is not sufficient. Few people outside South Africa would understand such sentences belonging

to the pidgin used in Ghana. As the two examples show it a mixture of English and carried words with a loose grammatical structure.

However, there are other pidgins based on other European languages besides English spoken in different parts of the world. A few examples are given below:

1. *Hawaiian Pidgin*: English based with influence of Chinese, Japanese, Hawaiian, Portuguese and Philippine languages about 500,000 speakers.
2. *Pidgin Spanish:* Spanish based trading language used mainly by two Indian tribes in Venezuela.
3. *Nikari Karu Pidgin:* A Portuguese based pidgin used near Guyana near Brazil.
4. *Franco-Spanish Pidgin*: A contact language with limited use in Buenos Aires.

Pidgin has become widespread in use in African countries like Ghana. The educated people have expressed serious concern over the fact that Pidgin in Ghana has adulterated the Queen's English in the former British Colony. What is more, they believe that it is threatening to turn pidgin into the country's national language besides adulterating Standard English, as many young people of Ghana cannot express themselves properly when they are not speaking pidgin.

In West African countries, the speaking of pidgin has gone deep even into their preparatory schools. It was reported that a majority of the students are reluctant to learn Standard English. The educated people, however, are not in favour of pidgin. On the contrary, they are bitter-critics and view pidgin to be responsible for the poor English that is spoken and written there.

Pidgin is a convenient way for British colonial administrators and the educated to communicate with office workers and servants. Although many of the educated people in pidgin speaking states understand pidgin, they hardly speak it unlike the younger people who prefer to speak pidgin. It has also been reported that female students of the University of Ghana view that Pidgin is consciously spoken more by men than by women. The

use of pidgin has become so widespread that many of the advertisements over the radio and TV in Ghana are in pidgin.



CHECK YOUR PROGRESS

Q 1: Answer the following questions.

(a) State briefly how pidgins develop.

(b) Give three distinctive features of pidgin languages.

(c) Give the term that is used to refer to the process by which a pidgin develops.

(d) What is Queen's English?

12.4 CREOLE

A creole is a pidgin language, which has become the native-language of a community. This definition shows that pidgins and creoles are two stages in a single process of linguistic development. At the first stage, within a community increasing number of people begin to use pidgin as a principal means of communication. Therefore, their children hear it more than many other languages and gradually the pidgin takes on a status of a mother tongue for them. A generation or so later, the pidgin becomes consolidated and widespread. The result is a creole or a creolized language. The process whereby a creole turns into a creole is called creolization.

The switch from pidgin to creole involves a major expansion in the vocabulary range, sentence structure and style, which now have to cope with the everyday demands made upon the mother tongue by its speakers. There is also a highly significant shift in the overall patterns of language use found in the community. Pidgins are by their nature auxiliary languages, learnt alongside vernacular languages, which are much more developed in structure and use. The term auxiliary language is used here to mean a makeshift language used exclusively for a specific communicative purpose with makers of a language community who do not have competence in the standard variety of the language. Thus, pidgin is used side by side with a standard language of the two speech communities. On the other hand, creoles by contrast are vernacular in their own right. When a creole develops,

it is usually at the expense of the other languages spoken in the area.

The main source of conflict is likely to be with the standard form of the language from which it derives, and with which it usually co-exists. The standard language has the status, which comes with social prestige, education and wealth. A creole has no such status, its roots lying in a history of dominance and slavery. Inevitably, creole speakers find themselves in great pressure to change their speech in the direction of their standard. The process by which a creole attains the features of the standard language from which most of its vocabulary and structures come, is known as decreolization. The creole that was developed in Jamaica and Guyana are English based creoles. Through the process of decreolization, these creoles have become close to Standard English.

Creole speakers may like to consider their languages to be their first language, even their national language. They tend to develop a resistance towards Standard English and consider their creole a standard language for them. Under such a situation, a creole attains the status of a dialect or a language of a speech community.



CHECK YOUR PROGRESS

Q 2: Answer the following questions:

(a) Define a creole.

(b) Briefly explain the term creolization.

(c) Explain the term ‘auxiliary language’.

(d) Explain the term ‘decreolization’.

12.5 STANDARD LANGUAGE

The term ‘Standard Language’ or ‘Standard dialect’ has to be seen in the context of the other regional dialects that one being used by the members of a speech community. While theoretically all the dialects of language have the status of being the language of the members of a speech community, it is only one of the dialects that attain the status of a standard and acceptability in a speech community. Here we shall discuss some of the factors that lead to the standardization of a dialect from amongst one or

many others.

Suzanne Romaine defines standard language as a highly codified variety of a language, which has been developed and elaborated for use across a broad range of functions. The definition implies that several variations of the language exist. These variations refer to variations of region or class distinctions among members of a speech community. It is an interesting fact of languages that from among a number of dialectical variations, there emerges a dialect, which attains the status of a standard. This dialect is known as standard dialect or standard language.

The standardization of a particular dialect in relation to one or more dialects is not necessarily the result of deliberate policy. On the contrary, there are a number of processes that are involved in the emergence of a standard language from amongst the several dialects existing in the language. R.A. Hudson, in his book *Sociolinguistics* (1999) discusses four of the processes that are involved in the emergence of a situational language. These have been briefly discussed below:

1. *Selection*: Selection in the context of standardization of a language refers to the choice of one of the existing dialects by members of a speech community from amongst the several varieties of dialects in the language. A standard language does not arise through a natural course of linguistic education, nor does a standard language spring into existence. The selection of a dialect as a standard depends upon factors like the following :

- Royal patronage as was seen in the case of the dialect of Wessex in the Old English Period, which had become a standard overriding other dialects.
- Production of literary works having an appeal on header as in the case of the East Midland dialect, which became a standard during the Middle English Period.

Other factors like patronizing a dialect by commercial enterprises, can also lead to the selection of a dialect as standard.

2. *Codification:* Codification implies the fixing of or codifying the grammatical rules, the norms of pronunciation, spelling and other

writing conventions through dictionaries, grammar books and prominent writings. More than anything else school grammar books and dictionaries are major steps towards the codifying of the language. Using a dialect in the present media also contribute towards the codification of a dialect. The publication of grammar books by John Lyly (1554-1666), Ben Jonson (1572-1637) among a few others, Dr Johnson's (1709-84) *A Dictionary of the English Language* contributed towards codifying English by standardizing spelling. It is the codified form of the language that contributes towards standardizing the language.

3. *Elaboration of Functions:* The variety of functions that a language is required to perform in society provides the claim for that language to be the standard more than any other varieties of the language. The standard variety usually becomes the language of government transaction, the language of the media, the language of the law court and bureaucracy, the language of scientific discourse besides the language of literary expression. In order to perform such varied linguistic roles, the language requires extra linguistic items to be added to the variety especially scientific and technical vocabulary. However, it is also necessary to develop new conventions for making existing forms. Thus, different varieties of register make their appearance in the standard form only.
4. *Acceptance:* To be a standard language, the variety has to be accepted by the speech community. At one level, acceptance of a dialect as a standard amount to compromising on one's regional dialect for the sake of wider acceptability and comprehensibility. At another level, the standard language serves as a strong unifying force for the state, and at the same time, shares a common bond with people of the countries.

We have discussed four of the processes that are involved in the standardization of a language. English is a striking example how the language has been standardized at different periods of its growth since the Old English Period, Middle English period down to our time and how writers

like Shakespeare, Milton, Dr. Johnson, Matthew Arnold and T. S. Eliot among others, had contributed towards evolving a standard language.



CHECK YOUR PROGRESS

Q 3: Answer the following questions.

(a) Define 'standard language'.

(b) Which dialect became standard in the Old English period and why?

(c) Briefly state the contribution of Dr. Johnson's Dictionary towards the standardization of English.

(d) Explain some of the functions of a standard language.

12.6 BILINGUALISM

The term 'bilingualism' is used to refer to the use of two languages either by an individual who is a bilingual, or by a group of speakers, such as the inhabitants of a particular region or a nation. In everyday use, the word bilingual usually means a person who speaks, reads, or understands two languages equally well. However, a bilingual person usually has a better knowledge of one language than of the other. For example, he/she may

(a) be able to read and write in only one language

(b) use each language indifferent types of situations e.g. one language at home and the other at work

(c) use each language for different communicative purposes e.g. one language for talking about school-life and the other for talking about personal feelings.

Some countries are officially bilingual in the sense that they have two official, national or regional languages. A well-known example of an officially bilingual country is Canada. Structurally, Canada is a federation made up of ten provinces and two territories, each of which has its own capital and government. The federal government has exclusive authority in certain areas like defence, currency etc. whereas education comes under the jurisdiction of the provincial government. In most of the provinces, officially both English and French have been accepted for implementation,

thus making it a bilingual country. For two rival languages to exist side by side in a place, it is imperative that there should be a climate of agreement between the speakers of the two languages on a number of language issues and during the 1960s initiatives were taken for language planning especially for school education.

One of the areas of concern in bilingual situations in the area of language teaching is that bilingual education programmes may be of different types and include the use of a single school language, which is not the child's home language. This is technically called immersion programme. Thus, we can say that immersion programme is a form of bilingual education in which children who speak only one language enter a school where a second language is the medium of instruction for all pupils. For example, there are schools in Canada or English speaking children, where French is the language of instruction and vice versa. If these children are taught in French for the whole day, it is called a total immersion programme. However, if they are taught in French for only part of the day it is called a partial immersion programme.

Secondly, another area of language teaching in bilingual situations is the use of the child's home language where the child enters school but later a gradual change to the use of the school language for teaching some subjects and the home language for teaching others. This strategy of exposure to two languages in the school environment is called maintenance bilingual education.

Moreover, there is yet another strategy of language teaching in bilingual situations it is the partial or total use of the child's home language when the child enters school and at a later stage change to the use of the school language only. This strategy of exposure to two languages is called transitional bilingual education.

There is yet another strategy of language teaching in bilingual situations. According to this strategy, or more appropriately, programme, the child is exposed to a classroom where the language of instruction is not the first language of some of the learners, but is the first language of the other learners. This happens in many countries including Canada where

immigrant children enter school and are taught in the language of that country.



CHECK YOUR PROGRESS

Q 4: Answer the following questions.

(a) Explain the term 'bilingualism'.

(b) State how Canada is a bilingual country.

(c) Define the term 'immersion programme.

(d) Define the term 'submersion programme'.

12.7 MULTILINGUALISM

The term *multilingualism* is used in sociolinguistics to refer to a language situation in a country in which three or more languages are used by a speech community. An individual who belongs to such a language situation is referred to as a multilingual. Thus, multilingualism is essentially plurality of languages. Thereby it also includes bilingualism but these two concepts are often contrasted in sociolinguistics and applied linguistics.

There are two divergent views on the concept of multilingualism. One view may be referred to as the western view or the concept, which is remarkably different from that professed by multilingual countries like India. The western view is obviously the view of the monolingual situations. In his book *Fundamental Concepts of Language Teaching*, H.S. Sterne while discussing the concept of multilingualism in society and in education, observes that multilingualism is often regarded as "an irritation, a residue of the past , often as a retrograde form of regionalism or as politically dangerous irredentism or separatism"(p 230). He observes that sometimes the struggle amongst different language groups to achieve pre-eminence or recognition cause riots and civil strife. Such a view towards multilingualism is undoubtedly that of a monolingual society. The view is that bilingualism or multilingualism is regarded as a problem and detrimental to society or to the individual rather than as a normal state of affairs and an asset.

It is obvious that the western point of view fails to account for the fact that in a multilingual situation like India, multilingualism is an all-pervading

element, affecting every aspect of the country's life. In the Indian context, it is a very ancient concept going back to the times of the Vedas. The *Atharva Veda* is a very ancient book, which affirms that even in the ancient past there were many religions and many people in India staying together. Hence, from a distant past, multilingualism has remained the cornerstone of India's culture and sensibility.

The point has been realised when it became necessary to draw the political map of India soon after independence on the basis of linguistic states. There was of course a growing apprehension that because of linguistic states, the inter-linguistic and inter-regional movement would become impossible and the political boundaries would virtually send off the language – cultural boundaries between various regions in the country. However, the apprehension was proved to be wrong. Far from being a factor of disunity, multilingualism has become a unifying factor. Obviously, languages by themselves are not a destructive factor. On the contrary, multiplicity of languages can be seen as an expression of Indian culture. The development of state languages was not aimed at any disunity but a "unity in diversity". To predict that as the state languages gain in power the centre-state conflict will become intense indicates a wrong notion of multilingualism in India.

While discussing the concept of multilingualism in India the question that remains is that the language policy in the country like the 8th Schedule doesn't even take cognizance of the 1,652 spoken languages. On the contrary, it tends to highlight certain languages and minimize the importance of some others. The three-language formula of the Government also fails to account for the minority languages. In every state, there are 30-40% of the population speaking minority languages, which can be divided into 3 categories.

a) Tribal dialects
b) Minor languages like Bundelkhandi, Bhojpuri, Magahi etc. within the states.
c) Major languages in India which happen to be minority languages in a particular state like Marathi or Tamil in Karnataka, or Urdu in Uttar

Pradesh.

Most state governments appear to be reluctant to introduce multiple mediums of instruction to meet the needs of various linguistic groups amongst students. It is often feared that recognising the existence of dialects and many small languages may lead to disintegration. However, experience has shown that it is not recognition but non-recognition of languages that has led to diverse movements. In a multilingual country like India, linkage is the age- old tradition and must be emphasized. The varieties of languages can be linked in various ways and one of the most effective ways is translation.

Translation is accepted as one of the ways of reconciling the interests of various groups. In fact, the programme of action of the National Policy of Education of 1986 has for the first time included translation in its programme. It emphasises that serious effort at translation of books from one language to the other be made. The 1992 Perspective Paper on Education also reiterates this view.

It is true that in the name of multilingualism and equality, the country cannot develop a system where all the 1652 mother tongues are recognised and supported by the state and used for all functions. At the same time, it should not lend us to favour one language because such an attitude goes against the character of multilingualism in India. The present impediments on India can be reduced by not replacing a language of power like English by another language of power and developing just one national language but through an elaborate pattern of inter-regional inter-ethnic communication.

The multilingual situation in India has considered translation an important component of educational policy. *The National Policy on Education* (1986) so far as language policy is concerned, which reiterates the *National Policy on Education* (1968), rightly recognizes translation as one of the important activities for the development of languages. The *Programme of Action* (1992) has also emphasised on translation of books from one language to another.

Moreover, it is only through translation that we can achieve the development of what is known as Indian Literature. Encouragement of

translation work in minority languages can lead to the understanding of the basic unity and the wonderful diversities of Indian literature. Indeed in view of the Indian tradition of multi-culturalism and multilingualism, translation becomes a very important instrument for negotiating social tensions, language conflicts, and for identifying a plurality of linguistic expressions and cultural experience.

Further, the issue on the use of English in a multilingual situation like India needs to be considered in clear perspectives. English has served as a great unifying force in India's struggle for independence. It is through this language that the leaders from different parts of the country could communicate and chalk out their common plans of action. Even now, English is playing the important role as a national link language for the purpose of inter-state correspondence. Besides, it has become the language of trade and commerce between different parts of the country and even outside the country.

The National Curriculum Framework (2005) has addressed the issue of the multilingual character of India from a very positive standpoint by suggesting the promotion of multilingualism in the framework of the three-language formula. The NCF 225 suggests that language teaching needs to be multilingual not only in terms of the languages offered to children but also in terms of evolving strategies that would use the multilingual classroom as resource. The classroom teacher needs to see the positive advantages of multilingualism in a language-teaching programme.



CHECK YOUR PROGRESS

Q 5: Answer the following questions.

(a) Define the term 'multilingualism'.

(b) Discuss the importance of translation in multilingual societies.

(c) Explain the view of NCF 2005 on translation.

(d) Briefly discuss the use of English in multilingual situations.

12.8 LANGUAGE PLANNING

Language has always been a very sensitive issue in multilingual situations. In the Indian situation, this fact becomes obvious in view of the fact that India has always been multilingual and multicultural. Language policy was never discussed during the British period except for the brief debate between the Orientalists and Occidentals during the time of Raja Rammohun Roy who had taken a prominent part in the great educational controversy between the Orientalists and the Occidentals wherein he sided with the latter. However, for his opposition, the clamour of the former for the exclusive pursuit of Oriental studies would most probably have prevailed. His letter on English Education to the Viceroy Lord Amherst in 1832 is a remarkable significant work in support of English studied in India. The letter locates the contradiction between the modern scientific spirit of European civilization and its education policy in India. He had expressed his shock at the proposal of the government for the establishment of a Sanskrit college in Calcutta. In his letter he pointed out that, it did not conform to the liberal image of the British. This view projected in his letter contains his urge for language planning for education.

After the Independence of India, the question as to whether Hindi or English should be the National Official Language was debated upon in the Indian Parliament raising a strong awareness for the need for language planning which involves the creation and implementation of an official policy about how the languages and linguistic varieties of a country are to be used. With a multiplicity of languages spoken within the country, it becomes necessary to choose a single language as a norm for official, educational or other purposes. Decisions are to be made regarding the status of a language over others, which language should be the school language and so on. It is in this context we have to refer to the three-language formula, which can be seen as a major step towards language planning.

The three-language formula is a consensus reached among leaders of different interest group. The National Education Policy of 1964, popularly called the Kothari Commission after its illustrious Chairman Professor D. S. Kothari, proposed a Three Language Formula (TLF), which was later

modified by the government. The TLF thrashed out in 1968 by the government was approved by the conference of the State Chief Ministers and accepted by the Parliament. The TLF is thus the government's major step towards language planning in the country.

The operation of the plan included the implementation of the Formula by all State Boards of School Education across the country by way of designing the language structure as to what will be the L1, what will be the L2 and what will be the L3 in the school curriculum. In the process of implementation, further modifications by the states were affected to correlate with the needs and aspirations of languages by different states. For example, in Tamil Nadu Hindi was given up, thus reducing the scheme virtually to a two-language formula. CBSE went further ahead with its modification by prescribing either Hindi or English as L1. Yet, interestingly, the proliferation of English medium schools across the country violated the constitutional provision of primary education through the mother tongue.

The problems arising in implementation of a uniform language policy across the country is understandable. The government in the early stages of the independence of the country implemented its commitment for the formation of linguistic states, which had ruled out the function of Hindi as the unitary symbol of the Indian nation but had given the status of an Official Language. The National Curriculum Framework (NCF 2005) does not see the multiplicity of languages as a problem but a "range of opportunities" (p36) which needs to be exploited by proper planning.



CHECK YOUR PROGRESS

Q 6: Answer the following questions:

(a) Briefly state the importance of the letter of Raja Rammohun Roy to Lord Amherst.

(b) Discuss the debate between the Orientalists and the Occidentalists in British India.

(c) What is the three-language formula?

(d) Discuss the three-language formula in the context of the primary school curriculum.



12.9 LET US SUM UP

In this unit, we discussed some important areas of sociolinguistics. We discussed pidgin as a system of communication that has grown up among people who do not share a common language but who want to talk to each other for trading and other specific reasons. We drew examples of pidgins have been used in Ghana and in some other parts of the world. We discussed the concept of creole in relation to a pidgin. We observed that a creole becomes the mother tongue of a community but not a pidgin; they are two stages in a single process of linguistic development. We discussed the process of creolization that takes place when increasing number of people begins to use pidgin as a principal means of communication. Next, we discussed the concept of 'Standard Language' or 'Standard dialect' in the context of the other regional dialects that are used by the members of a speech community by stating that while theoretically all the dialects of language have the status of being the language of the members of a speech community, it is only one of the dialects that attain the status of a standard and acceptability in a speech community. We next discussed the concept of bilingualism and examined the features of a bilingual individual following it up with a discussion on the bilingual situation in Canada. Then we discussed a number of issues on *multilingualism* by referring to the multilingual situation of India, the three-language formula and the observations of NCF 205 on the multilingual character of India. Finally, we took up the issue on language planning and its needs. We discussed how it becomes necessary to choose a single language as a norm for official, educational or other purposes and how decisions are to be made regarding the status of a language over others, which language should be the school language and so on.



12.10 FURTHER READING

1) Crystal, David. (1987). *The Cambridge Encyclopaedia of Language.* Cambridge.

2) Hudson, R.A. (1999). *Sociolinguistics.* Cambridge.

3) Ramakrishna, S. (ed.) (1997). *Translation & Multilingualism.* Pencraft: New Delhi.

4) Romanine, Suzanne. (2009). *Language in Society.* Oxford.

5) Jack Richards et. al. (1985). *Longman Dictionary of Applied Linguistics.* Longman.

6) Stern, H.H. (1983). *Fundamental Concepts of Language Teaching.* Oxford.



12.11 ANSWERS TO CHECK YOUR PROGRESS (HINTS ONLY)

Ans to Q 1: (a), (b) and (c) see 12.3.

(d) Queen's English is a term used to refer to Standard British English.

Ans to Q 2: (a), (b) and (c) see 12.4.

(d) Decreolization is the process by which a creole becomes more like the standard language from which most of its vocabulary comes. For example, an English based creole may become more like Standard English.

Ans to Q 3: (a) and (b) see 12.5.

(c) One of the greatest contributions of Dr Samuel Johnson's (1709 – 1784) *Dictionary* towards the standardization of English in the eighteenth century is that he had fixed the system of English spelling. It played a great part in shaping the writing of the educated class.

(d) see 12.5.

Ans to Q 4: (a) to (d) see 12.7

Ans to Q 5: (a)



12.12 POSSIBLE QUESTIONS

Q 1: Give brief answers to the following questions:

(a) Define the term ‘auxiliary language’.

(b) Name the pidgin used in Venezuela.

(c) Define “creolization’.

(d) Explain the term “bilingualism’.

Q 2: Answer the following questions in about 100-159 words:

(a) Discuss the features of a pidgin language.

(b) Draw a distinction between pidgins and creoles.

(c) Discuss the process of decreolization.

(d) Define the term “standard language’.

Q 3: Give answers to the following questions in about 400 words.

(a) Discuss the process of standardization of languages with illustrative examples.

(b) Discuss some of the language teaching approaches adopted in bilingual countries like Canada.

(c) Discuss the multilingual situation of India with reference to classroom pedagogy.

(d) Define language planning and state how the issue has been addressed in post-independent India.

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UNIT 13: PSYCHOLINGUISTICS

UNIT STRUCTURE

13.1 Learning Objectives

13.2 Introduction

13.3 Nature and Scope of Psycholinguistics

13.4 Major Schools of Psychology of Learning: The Behaviourist School

13.5 The Cognitive School

13.6 Constructivism

13.7 Theory of Innate Language Structure

13.8 Acquisition - Learning Hypothesis

13.9 Let us Sum Up

13.10 Further Reading

13.11 Answers to Check Your Progress (Hints Only)

13.12 Possible Questions

13.1 LEARNING OBJECTIVES

After going through unit, you will be able to

- explain the nature and scope of psycholinguistics
- distinguish between the behaviourist approach and the cognitive approach
- understand the concept of constructivism
- appreciate the theory of innate language structure
- appreciate the acquisition - learning hypothesis.

13.2 INTRODUCTION

This unit is concerned with a number of language learning theories that belong to the field of study known as psycholinguistics. We began with a definition of psycholinguistics as a branch of linguistics that is concerned with the study of the mental processes that are involved in producing and understanding language. Then we discussed the nature and scope of this

field by bringing out the interrelation between linguistics and psychology by stating that most areas of psychological inquiry notably thinking, learning, memory, attitude formation, language learning behaviour etc. are the concern of linguistics as well.

We defined the term 'behaviour' in the context of the language learning behaviour of individual learners and their learning processes as an action which can be seen, observed and measured in an objective way. Behaviour, which is a concern of educational psychology has relevance in psycholinguistics. Indeed, a psychological inquiry on language learning behaviour is essentially a concern of psycholinguistics. We noted that psychological inquiry on language learning not only leads to three schools of language learning namely the behaviourist, the cognitive and the constructivist theories of language learning, but also affective variables like interest and motivation.

In our discussion on the behaviourist school of psychology we subscribed to the view that language is a form of behaviour. We noted that behaviourism has based its theories on empirical evidence obtained from experiments with living organisms and laboratory animals. We discussed one of the experiments of B.F.Skinner, a leading figure of the behaviourist school and an experimental psychologist.

Another issue in the area of psycholinguistics that we have discussed here concerns the theoretical issues on how the first language is acquired and how the second language is learnt. Psycholinguistics addresses issues on language acquisition of mother tongue speakers examining how L1 acquisition has long been thought of as a process of imitation of the sounds that they hear. Psycholinguistics redefines the general conception of L1 acquisition by throwing light on how they acquire a grammatical ability.

In our discussion on the behaviourist psychology, we also aimed at addressing the language learning behaviour of second language (L2) learners in classroom situations. We noted that in the behaviourist paradigm, classroom approaches for the teaching of the second language (L2) are developed around the skills of listening, speaking, reading and writing. In order to develop these skills, the learner has to be provided with a knowledge

of vocabulary and also an ability to manipulate structures in the language. These ideas are developed into a pedagogical framework in an L2 classroom situation

In our discussion on cognitive view of language learning, we briefly surveyed the field of research into L2 learning that had initiated a paradigm shift from behaviourism to cognitive approach to L2 learning. We referred to Chomsky who had rejected the idea that language is governed by stimulus-response which is essentially a behaviourist paradigm. We noted Chomsky's argument that language is an innate property of human beings, and external agencies have little role in it. Referring to a paradigm shift, we noted that the cognitive function is the faculty that permits the learner to process the language input received and produce new utterances. The utterances that the learner produces are not copies of what he or she had heard. On the contrary, what the learner had received as input is processed in the language acquisition device of the learners to enable her to produce new utterances.

Next, we moved on to the concept of constructivism, a concept based on a different set of assumptions among which most importantly the assumption that knowledge is subjective, contextual and inherently partial and that learners construct knowledge in the social and cultural environment in which they are placed.

Falling in line with constructivism, we explored the theory of innate language structure which we stated, has developed out of an awareness of the limitations of an imitation/reinforcement view of language acquisition propounded by behaviourist psychology. We conclude the unit with a discussion on the monitor model theory propounded by Krashen.

13.3 NATURE AND SCOPE OF PSYCHOLINGUISTICS

Psycholinguistics is a branch of linguistics that is concerned with the study of the mental processes that are involved in producing and understanding language. The term 'mental processes' used in the above line, is the concern of psychology which is often defined as the science of mind and of behaviour.

The range of psychology is indeed very wide; it includes every kind of human thought and every kind of action by human beings and other animals thereby giving us terminology and fields of studies like human psychology, animal psychology, educational psychology, experimental psychology, and especially psycholinguistics. The term psycholinguistics which is the concern of this unit is thus, a field of study that has established an interrelationship between psychology and linguistics. Most areas of psychological inquiry – thinking, learning, memory, attitude formation, language learning behaviour etc. are the concern of linguistics as well.

13.3.1 Language learning behaviour

The language learning behaviour involves the individual learners and their learning processes that take place in the minds of the learners. The term behaviour in this context *refers to an action which can be seen, observed and measured in an objective way*. This behaviour which is a concern of psychology has relevance in psycholinguistics. Indeed, a psychological inquiry on language learning behaviour is essentially a concern of psycholinguistics.

A major scope psycholinguistics includes the following issues:

(a) The major theories of language learning notably the behaviourist, cognitive and constructivist views of language learning,

(b) The language behaviour of first language and the second language learners and their developmental characteristics,

(c) The learning processes, motivation of learning, factors affecting learning, diagnosis of learning problems,

(d) Evaluation of learning performances.

13.3.2 Behaviourist and Cognitive Psychology

The first language (L1) learners are the mother tongue users of the language. Psycholinguistics addresses theoretical issues on the behaviourist view of language learning in terms of stimulus and response. It states how the behaviourist paradigm addresses issues

on L1 and L2 learning that are manifest through language teaching approaches like the structural approach. According to behaviourism language acquisition has been thought of as a process of imitation and reinforcement. It is a fact that children learn to speak by imitating the sounds that they are exposed to and having their responses strengthened by the repetitions, corrections and other reactions that adult provide. In recent years it has become clear that this conception of language acquisition will not explain all the facts of language development. Children do imitate a great deal, especially in learning sounds and vocabulary, but little of their grammatical ability can be explained in that way. It is left to psycholinguistics to address this issue.

The cognitive view of language learning is also another area of psycholinguistics. The cognitive theory underlying psycholinguistics is that L1 and L2 learners demonstrate a learning behaviour that is different from the behaviour demonstrated in the case of the behaviourist paradigm. A child learns the L1 subconsciously whereas he/she learns the L2 consciously.

13.3.3 Affective Variables: Attitude and Motivation

Psycholinguistics takes into account various learning factors including the affective factors like the learners' attitude and motivation among others that contribute to L2 learning. The cognitive theory tells us that learners will learn when they are interested in what they are learning. This interest grows out of the affective factors of attitude and motivation. The learners' attitudes influence language learning in a number of ways Gardiner and Lambert (1972) two researchers had investigated a number of different attitudes which they consider relevant to L2 learning. These fall into three categories:

1. attitudes towards the community and people who speak theL2,
2. attitude towards learning the language concerned,
3. attitude towards languages and language learning in general.

Attitudes also include motivational factors. Motivation in

language learning can be defined in terms of the learners' overall goal or orientation. Gardiner and Lambert have distinguished two kinds of motivation: instrumental and integrative.

Instrumental motivation is the result of an external need. Learning a second language is perceived to be an instrument for achieving or fulfilling some other need. This perception motivates the learner to the study of the L2 with greater interest. The interest in achieving an upward social mobility is seen as an instrumental motivation of the language learner.

Integrative motivation is another type of motivation that can inspire or interest a learner to take more interest in learning the L2. Integrative motivation arises out of a desire of the learner to become a part of the speech community using the language. Motivation of this kind is rooted in an internal emotional need rather than a goal that can be externally fulfilled. Research on motivation has found that both types of motivation are to be found in any learner in varying degrees. They also influence learners to take a greater interest in learning.



CHECK YOUR PROGRESS

Q 1: Answer the following questions.

(a) Define the areas of psycholinguistics.

(b) Describe the concept of language behaviour.

(c) Explain the term instrumental motivation.

(d) Explain the term integrative motivation.

13.4 THE BEHAVIOURIST SCHOOL

The major schools of the psychology of learning include the behaviourist and the cognitive schools of learning. Here we shall discuss the behaviourist school of psychology. The basic concern of this school of psychology is that language is a form of behaviour. The theories of the behaviourist school or behaviourism are based on empirical evidence obtained from experiments with living organisms and laboratory animals.

13.4.1 The Experiment of B.F. Skinner

One of the leading figures of the behaviourist school is B.F. Skinner, the experimental psychologist. He had shown in an elaborate experiment with rats how living organisms act in response to the stimuli presented by the external environment. Skinner put a rat in a cage fitted with a button which when pressed would ring a bell. The rat was kept starving, until such a time when scampering in hunger, it accidentally pressed the button and the bell rang. Food was given to it as soon as the bell rang. But again it was kept starving until such a time when by accident it again rang the bell.

Eventually, the rat was conditioned to press the button whenever in need for food. Skinner argued that the feeling of hunger acts as a stimulus resulting in the rat's behavioural response to the pressing of the bell. We say now that the rat has been conditioned to ring the bell, that is , it has now developed a new pattern of behaviour which it did not originally possess and which is not natural to it. This change from one pattern of behaviour to another is called conditioned learning.

13.4.2 Behaviourist Language Learning

Through this experiment, Skinner made the observation that human beings also learnt language in the same way. He referred to a crying child that is taught how to ask for milk by introducing her to a few basic sounds or words. She stores these sounds or words in her memory to use it when hungry. In due course, the child will be exposed to more language inputs that help her to use the structures or sentence patterns as responses to appropriate stimuli. Skinner stated that this is just another form of behavioural response to some stimulus. He calls it verbal behaviour. Through such process, the child's attention is drawn to various objects, events or experiences around her. At the same time she is given lexical items to name the objects and events together with short structures that she can handle.

In this way she recognizes persons as daddy, mummy etc. and also words correlating with animals, birds, food items and other things around her little world. Parents spend a great deal of tie in introducing these new lexical items which she stores for her use.

When the child confuses a word with the object, for example calling a cat as dog, the parent corrects her and she is asked to produce the correct form again. Production of correct form often brings reward which may be a kiss or a hug. This system of reward and punishment works like what behavioural psychologists call "operant conditioning". *The term operant conditioning refers to a way of conditioning an operation so that the correct forms bring reward and incorrect ones bring punishments.* This realization that certain kinds of forms go with certain kinds of contexts is an important part of the strategy of L2 learning through the behaviourist principles.

At the initial stages of language acquisition when the child is exposed to objects and lexical and simple structural items, very often parents use words which are restricted to the small ambit of the child. For example, an Asssamese mother would introduce a word like *mum* to refer to food and exaggerate the utterance *amaar jaane mum khabo* stimulating her to open her mouth so that she can pop in the food in the child's mouth. Such use of language is called *caretaker speech* or *motherese*. Caretaker speech usually has shorter and simpler utterances besides clearer pronunciation sometimes with exaggeration. This strategy of introducing a child to a language is restricted to L1 and definitely not to exposure to children to an L2.

From the above discussion, it is seen that the behaviourist view of language learning can be explained as follows:

1. Language behaviour is a process of stimulus-response.
2. Language is learnt only through use and practice. The more the learner is exposed to the use of language, the better is the chance of language acquisition.
3. Language learning takes place through a process of habit

formation. It implies that repetition and practice help better learning.

4. The production of language depends on the situation which makes its use necessary language cannot be taught outside a context or a situation.
5. Producing the correct response to a stimulus is desirable. Wrong responses are discouraged and immediate remediation is proposed.
6. Every new item learnt must be reinforced by further practice before further learning begins.

13.4.3 Language Learning as Skill Development

When we closely examine the language learning process of the child, we discover that language is essentially a skill. In learning the mother tongue the first skills that the child develops are the skills of listening to the sounds and structures and developing responses to what she had heard. In other words, the child learns to speak. Language is essentially speech, the skills of reading and writing come later. In the behaviourist paradigm, classroom approaches for the teaching of the second language (L2) are developed around the skills of listening, speaking, reading and writing. In order to develop these skills, the learner has to be provided with a knowledge of vocabulary and also an ability to manipulate structures in the language. These ideas are developed into a pedagogical framework in an L2 classroom situation

The behaviourist theory of language learning has received a great deal of attention in the area of L2 learning. A popular method of L2 learning that is based on the behaviourist principles is the Structural Approach which is being discussed in a separate unit at 15.5.



CHECK YOUR PROGRESS

Q 2: Answer the following questions.

(a) Briefly outline Skinner's experiment with rats.

(b) Define 'operant conditioning'.

(c) Define 'caretaker speech'.

(d) Briefly outline the behaviourist view of language learning.

13.5 THE COGNITIVE SCHOOL

Another major school of psychology of learning is the cognitive view of language learning. Researches carried out in the 70s of the last century into second language learning processes had brought a large number of findings that had challenged the whole concept of the behaviourist paradigm. Pit Corder (1967) in an essay titled "The Significance of Learners' Errors" and Larry Selinker's essay titled "Interlanguage", are two of the most outstanding voices that challenged behaviourism and heralded cognitive approaches to L2 learning. Both the essays are included in Richards' *Error Analysis* (1990). Corder's essay rejected a behaviourist account of L2 learning and suggested that learners made use of intrinsic internal linguistic processes. Selinker's essay argued that L2 learners possess their own individual linguistic systems that are independent from both the learner's L1 and L2.

Researches carried out in the 70s into the areas of learners' errors in the transitional stages of L2 learning and the morpheme studies investigating the order in which learners acquire language features, have been strengthened by the researches in the 80s with the theories of Stephen Krashen which had confirmed a paradigm shift from the behaviourist view of L2 learning. (We shall discuss Krashen a little later). The 90s saw a host of new theories introduced to the field, such as Michael Long's interaction hypothesis and Richard Schmidt's noticing hypothesis. However the most dominating voices of the cognitive field of L2 learning is that of the American linguist Noam Chomsky who had addressed some of the weaknesses of the behaviourist view of language learning. His views are discussed here.

13.5.1 Chomsky's Criticism of the Behaviourist View

Chomsky (1959) rejects the idea that language is governed by stimulus-response which is essentially a behaviourist paradigm which is illustrated below:

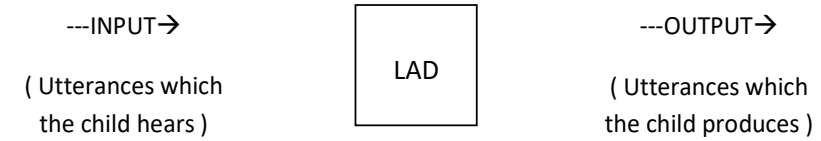
S ——————— R

In the above figure, S stands for stimulus and R for response. This model of stimulus – response paradigm implies that learners produce what they hear. In other words there is a correlation between input and output.

Chomsky's critique of Skinner is based on observations that it is not always the case that human beings produce only what they have heard in varying degrees. All human beings can produce more than what they have heard or have heard of. There is something that mediates between the stimulus and the response, or, more appropriately, between the input and the output. The something that mediates between the stimulus and response or input and output is the cognitive function or language acquisition device (LAD) which is diagrammatically represented as follows:

13.5.2 Language Acquisition Device

The cognitive function is the faculty that permits the learner to process the language input received and produce new utterances. The utterances that the learner produces are not copies of what he or she had heard. On the contrary, what the learner had heard is the input that is processed in the learner's LAD. When a learner has insufficient input, there is a likelihood of the learner to produce errors.



These are developmental errors that the learner produces. In Unit 14, in our discussion on errors, we shall elaborate the point on developmental errors. What we would like to state here is that

the language items produced are not the items that the learner had heard but ate the result of language processing through the LAD. This argument highlights a major paradigm shift from behaviourist psychology to cognitive psychology.

Secondly, Chomsky does not subscribe to the behaviourist view that language learning is essentially habit formation through repetition and practice. On the contrary, he argues that language is an innate property of human beings, and external agencies have only a limited role in it. He observes that it is incorrect to assume that language is another form of overt verbal behaviour like the rat pressing the button of the bell in a cage or a dog barking at the sight of a piece of bread. There is no way in the rat to communicate its reaction to the quality of the food.

These findings of researches into L1 learning had a tremendous bearing on classroom pedagogy. The communicative approach to language teaching discussed in 15.6 and the modern approaches discussed in 15.7 are undoubtedly the approaches that clearly bring out a paradigm shift from the behaviourist principles introduced in classroom pedagogy through the structural approach.



CHECK YOUR PROGRESS

Q 3: Answer the following questions

(a) Explain 'developmental errors'.

(b) State how Chomsky rejects the concept of language as being essentially habit formation.

(c) Name two researchers of the 70s whose researches had contributed to learners; behaviour in L2 learning.

(d) What is LAD?

13.6 CONSTRUCTIVISM

The concept of constructivism can be explained by contrasting the traditionalist view of learning with the constructivist view. The traditionalist view is based on what is known as the objectivist view of knowledge. The

issues of this view of learning are as follows:

1. Knowledge is objective, universal and complete.
2. It can be transmitted by those who have it to those who do not have it.
3. The teacher transmits authoritative knowledge to learners who are by and large passive.
4. According to this paradigm, learners are considered to be passive receivers of knowledge.
5. The teacher is the source of all knowledge which he transmits to the learner.

13.6.1 Paradigm Shift in Constructivism

In contrast, one can observe a paradigm shift in the constructive view of learning. This view is based on a different set of assumptions which can be summarised as follows:

1. Knowledge is subjective, contextual and inherently partial.
2. Learners construct knowledge in the social and cultural environment in which they are placed.
3. The teacher assumes the role of a facilitator and guide.
4. The teacher plays the role of the manager and not the controller of the class.
5. Learners take the responsibility of their own learning.
6. They question, state problems, design experiments and discuss the results with others.
7. Learners do not receive knowledge as passive learners.

13.6.2 Constructivist View of Learning

The constructivist view of learning is associated with great names like Jean Piaget (1933,1977) who in *The Origin of Intelligence in the Child* express the view that learning is strongly influenced by the learners' developmental strategies. Learners move through identifiable stages of physical, intellectual, emotional and social growth that determine what can be learned and with what depth of

understanding. Learners learn best when they are at their proximal stage of development. The nature of the learning task is crucial for learning to take place.

Contemporary constructivists R.J Osborne and P Freyberg (1985) in *Learning How to Learn*, hold the view that learning is an adaptive process in which learners' conceptual schemes are progressively reconstructed so that they are in keeping with a wide range of experiences and ideas. It is also seen as an active process of sense-making over which the learner has some control. Posner et al (1982) formulated the theory of conceptual change and indicated the conditions required for it to occur. For conceptual change, the learners must feel dissatisfied with their own conceptions which are not sufficiently explicative. The new knowledge should be intelligible, fruitful and plausible.

From the thinking of the eminent scholars in the field, it becomes obvious that constructivism is a major rethinking about the teaching and learning process that will have a lasting impact in both curriculum and instruction. Constructivism provides a new theory of learning and also a new theory of teaching. The traditional methods of teaching consider teaching as transmission of facts to learners who are considered to be playing a passive role in the learning process.

13.6.3 Role of the Learner

The constructivist approach considers the learners as active learners; they should participate in experiences that accommodate experiences of learning that include inquiry activities, discovery, problem solving and discussions with peers and teachers, collecting and interpreting information from different sources, expressing their understanding in diverse ways. The teacher must provide authentic learning situations, complex learning environments and facilitate learning.

13.6.4 The Role of the Teacher

In the constructivist classroom, the teachers act as guide in the learning process with the aim of making the classroom activities learner centred. In view of the fact that most of our classrooms are crowded, with as many as 50 students in a class or more, it is all the more necessary to make the class learner-centred. The only way to give all the students time to speak or interact is to make them work together by organizing group-work. Their activities may be such that help the learners in clarifying ideas, providing rational explanations, challenging misconceptions, guiding experimentation, predicting results and drawing inferences. Teachers should ask questions that test students' ideas and provide feedback to them. They should be encouraged to debate ideas and also comment on answers and explanations provided by other students. At the same time teachers should keep track of which group they listen to so no one gets left out.

Thus, we see that the theory of constructivism is based on the idea that better learning takes place when the learner actively constructs knowledge and by reconciling on information with previous knowledge.



CHECK YOUR PROGRESS

Q 4: Answer the questions.

(a) Discuss the role of the teacher in the constructivist classroom.

(b) State the character of a constructivist classroom?

13.7 THEORY OF INNATE LANGUAGE STRUCTURE

In our discussion on the cognitive theory of language learning, our whole approach has been to drive home the argument that the child does not merely imitate speech to develop language habits. On the contrary, the child is equipped with a language acquisition device that helps him to process

linguistic data. We would like to follow up this argument by referring to another significant theory of second language acquisition, termed as the theory of innate language structure.

The theory of innate language structure has developed out of an awareness of the limitations of an imitation/reinforcement view of language acquisition propounded by behaviourist psychology. 'Innate', in the present context, is an application of the philosophical use of the term in psycholinguistics to refer to the view that a child is born with a biological predisposition to learn language. This statement can be illustrated by observing the language behaviour of children. Language acquisition seems to be an inevitable process in a human child. This faculty of acquisition of language is unrelated to general intelligence. It appears that even the duller child cannot help learning at last one language.

The innateness in the child's language learning faculty can also be justified by observing children talking to themselves. Very often we find children talking to themselves. It is all private exercise. The communicative social aspect of language is not present in this talk. In this egocentric talk, the child asks himself and answers his own questions, repeats other's talk, enjoys listening to his own speaking and amuses himself. This speaking is nothing but a play and language exercise.

Such behaviour of the child points to the fact that children must be born with an innate capacity for language development. The human brain is ready for language. Child psychologists argue that the child understands more than what he hears than he can say himself. When children are exposed to speech, certain general principles for discovering or structuring language automatically begin to operate. These principles constitute a child's language acquisition device (LAD).

The child uses its LAD to make sense of the utterances heard around it, deriving from the primary linguistic data hypothesis about the grammar of the language – what the sentences are, and how they are constructed. This knowledge is then used to produce sentences that after a series of trial and error actions, correspond to those in adult speech. The theory of innate language structure argues that these rapid and complex

developments of children's grammatical competence cannot be ascribed to imitation of adult speech which is too complex for their comprehension. On the contrary, they can be explained only by using the hypothesis that they are born with an innate knowledge of at least some of the universal structural principles of human language.

Another issue that the psycholinguist tries to explain is that of the critical age of language learning. Child psychologists are in agreement that up to the age of 12, a child seems to be in a better position to learn or speak at least two or more languages effortlessly. Potentially, the child is a much better learner of language than an adult. However, the adult L2 learner may use another gift in the learning of a language which the child does not possess, the power of mature reasoning which helps the adult to discover and understand rules more easily than the child. In some case the adult may prove to be a better language learner.



CHECK YOUR PROGRESS

Q 5: Answer the following questions.

(a) Define the theory of innate language structure.

(b) How can adult L2 learners be better language learners?

13.8 ACQUISITION – LEARNING HYPOTHESIS

Studies on second language learning originated with investigations into first language acquisition. Insights gathered from first language acquisition facilitated the study of second language learning. It was noted that there are fundamentally a number of differences between the two processes because the conditions governing the processes are not the same. In order to draw up the distinctions, it would be convenient to begin with a discussion on first language acquisition.

13.8.1 First Language Acquisition

Noam Chomsky (1965) introduced the mentalist theory of language learning which emphasised the learner's innate mental

capacity for acquiring a language and minimised the contribution of the linguistic environment. Thus, the situation shifted from the learner-external to the learner-internal factors, in other words, from language learning to language acquisition. The term acquisition is used to refer to the sub-conscious nature of the learning process. It is the unconscious picking up of a language through exposure in a natural setting. It differs from learning largely from the point of view that it is not a conscious and formal study of a second language in a classroom-like setting, but an unconscious process by which a child develops competence in his/her first language.

The view of first language acquisition as proposed by Chomsky is formalized in the Language Acquisition Device (LAD) hypothesis. The LAD does not refer to any particular part of the brain or even to any physical entity, but to a special type of mental organization particular in human beings, which acquires them to learn language, all that is required to set the device into operation is exposure to the language. The device then abstracts from the instances of language fed into the rules or regularities of the language in question. Gradually, in successive stages, the collection of rules of the concerned language constitutes the child's linguistic competence.

13.8.2 Second Language Learning

Second language acquisition or second language learning is the process by which people learn a second language. Second Language Acquisition (SLA) has now been used as a sub-discipline of psycholinguistics that is concerned with studying that process. Second language refers to any language that is learnt in addition to a learner's first language although the concept in our context refers to the learning of English as second language. The word 'learning' implies the making of a deliberate effort to teach the language. Learning implies teaching. The distinction between acquisition and learning is the core of the acquisition-learning hypothesis

propounded by Stephen Krashen. According to this theory, acquisition occurs subconsciously as a result of participating in a natural

A number of ELT specialists had addressed a number of hypotheses and theories relating to L2 learning. One of the most comprehensive theories of second language learning has been proposed by Stephen Krashen (1981). His theory is called Monitor Model and it takes into account the following parallel hypotheses which will help us in formulating a fair conception of SLA in our situation.

(a) The acquisition-learning hypothesis: Krashen's main argument here is that acquisition is an unconscious process of language learning whereas learning is a conscious process. Learning occurs as a result of conscious study of the formal properties of the language. the acquired knowledge is available for automatic processing. The learnt knowledge is available for controlled processing. During performance, acquired knowledge serves as the major source for initiating the comprehension and the production of utterances in a conversational exchange. Learnt knowledge is available as a monitor to the utterances produced by the acquired system.

(b) The natural order hypothesis: Krashen argues that learners acquire knowledge of L2 in a fixed order as a result of a predisposition to process language in highly specific ways. The development of language acquisition is continuous and incremental and passes through a series of stages. The incremental nature of L1 acquisition is evident from the way the length of the utterances that gradually increases and through the stages where the knowledge of the grammar is built up in steps. The complex grammatical forms are learnt slowly.

(c) The monitor hypothesis: It has been mentioned in the discussion on the acquisition-learning hypothesis that the monitor is the device that learners use of control the utterances. In other

words, the monitor is the device that edits their language performance. It utilizes learnt knowledge by acting upon and modifying utterances generated from acquired knowledge. Thus according to this theory, spontaneous oral performance depends upon the acquired system. Conscious formal knowledge only acts as a monitor.

(d) The input hypothesis: Krashen observes that SLA is dependent upon the availability of comprehensive input before the learner's internal processing mechanism can work. Input constitutes the language to which the learner is exposed. It can be written or spoken. Input serves as the corpus that the learner can use to determine the rules of the target language. He argues that for SLA to take place, the input should be slightly above the level of language data that the learner had already processed. This will supply the extra data which will become a part of the learner's corpus of language.

(e) The affective filter hypothesis: Krashen holds the view that affective factors relate to SLA and is seen as a part of the process of becoming adapted to a new culture through the L2. (see the point on affective variables discussed above) It is seen as an important aspect of SLA because language is one of the most observable expressions of culture. The affective filter controls how much input the learner comes into contact with and how much input is converted into intake. It is affective because the factors which determine its strength have to do with the learners' motivation, self-confidence and anxiety state.



13.9 LET US SUM UP

In this unit, we discussed the following language learning theories underlying psycholinguistics. We began with a definition of psycholinguistics as a branch of linguistics that is concerned with the study of the mental

processes that are involved in producing and understanding language. We discussed the nature and scope of this field by bringing out the interrelation between linguistics and psychology by stating that most areas of psychological inquiry notably thinking, learning, memory, attitude formation, language learning behaviour etc are the concern of linguistics as well. We defined the term 'behaviour' as an action which can be seen, observed and measured in an objective way by stating that a psychological inquiry on language learning behaviour is essentially a concern of psycholinguistics. We noted that psychological inquiry on language learning not only leads to three schools of language learning namely the behaviourist, the cognitive and the constructivist theories of language learning, but also affective variables like interest and motivation. In our discussion on the behaviourist school of psychology we discussed one of the experiments of B.F. Skinner, a leading figure of the behaviourist school and an experimental psychologist. We discussed the theoretical issues on how the first language is acquired and how the second language is learnt. We also discussed the classroom approaches for L2 teaching developed around the skills of listening, speaking, reading and writing. In order to develop these skills, the learner has to be provided with knowledge of vocabulary and also an ability to manipulate structures in the language. We briefly surveyed the field of research into L2 learning that had initiated a paradigm shift from behaviourism to cognitive approach to L2 learning. We noted Chomsky's argument that language is an innate property of human beings, and external agencies have little role in it. Next, we moved on to the concept of constructivism, a concept based on a different set of assumptions among which most importantly the assumption that knowledge is subjective, contextual and inherently partial and that learners construct knowledge in the social and cultural environment in which they are placed. Next, we explored the theory of innate language structure which we stated, has developed out of an awareness of the limitations of an imitation/reinforcement view of language acquisition propounded by behaviourist psychology. We concluded the unit with a discussion on the monitor model theory of Krashen.



13.10 FURTHER READING

1) Howatt, A.P.R. (1984) *A History of English Language Teaching,* Oxford.

2) Kudchedkar, S. (Ed 2002) *English Language Teaching in India,* Orient Longman.

3) Nagaraj, Geetha (2006) *English Language Teaching,* Orient Longman.

4) Richards, Jack C. (1990) *Error Analysis,* Longman.

5) Sharma, Santosh (2006) *Constructivist Approaches to Teaching and Learning,* NCERT.



13.11 ANWERS TO CHECK YOUR PROGRESS (HINTS ONLY)

Ans to Q 1:

(a) see 13.3

(b) see 13.3.1

(c) see 13.3.3

(d) see 13.3.3.

Ans to Q 2:

(a) see 13.4.1

(b) see 13.4.2

(c) see 13.4.2

(d) see 13.4.2

Ans to Q 3:

(a) Developmental errors are errors that L2 learners produce which can be seen as errors that inevitably occur due to the process of learning the language. a wrong verb form can be seen as such type of error, eg eated instead of ate.

(b) see 13.5.1

(c) see 13.5.

(d) see 13.5.2

Ans to Q 4:

(a) see 13.6.4

(b) Try yourself by referring to the learner-centred classroom where group-work, pair-work etc are used

Ans to Q 5:

(a) see 13.7

(b) see last para of 13.7



13.12 Possible QUESTIONS

Q 1: Give brief answers to the following questions.

(a) Explain the relationship between psychology and psycholinguistics.

(b) Define language skills.

(c) Explain

(d) According to the child psychologists, up to what age can a child learn two or more languages easily?

Q 2: Answer the following questions in about 100 words.

(a) Explain the major scope of psycholinguistics.

(b) Discuss Chomsky's critique on Skinner's views on behaviourism.

(c) Discuss briefly the value of the theory of innate language structure.

(d) Discuss the monitor theory of L2 learning.

Q 3: Answer the following questions in about 300 words.

(a) Discuss the behaviourist view of language learning.

(b) Discuss the cognitive view of language learning.

(c) Present a critique on the constructivist approach to classroom methodology.

(d) Discuss the acquisition-learning view on second language learning.

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UNIT 14: ENGLISH LANGUAGE TEACHING I

UNIT STRUCTURE

14.1 Learning Objectives

14.2 Introduction

14.3 ELT: A Historical Overview

14.4 Communicative Competence

14.5 Contrastive Analysis

14.6 Error Analysis

14.7 Interlanguage

14.8 Let us Sum up

14.9 Further Reading

14.10 Answers to Check Your Progress (Hints Only)

14.11 Possible Questions

14.1 LEARNING OBJECTIVES

After going through his unit, you will be able to

- appreciate the history of English language teaching
- understand the concept of communicative competence
- analyse the various sources and causes of errors in L2 learning
- appreciate the concept of interlanguage.

14.2 INTRODUCTION

This is the first of the two units on *English Language Teaching*, a term that has come to be known as ELT in the literature of language teaching. We begin this unit by providing a historical overview of ELT. By taking note of the status of English as a world language, we broadly divided the areas globally where English has been used and then focussed our attention on the Indian context. In this unit, we traced the history of teaching English in India from the point of the arrival of the East India Company to India though we have found that the formal teaching of English began with the famous *Minute on Indian Education* of T.B. Macaulay though we have noted that

even in the pre-Macaulay times the Bengal renaissance had created a climate for the craze for learning the language. Raja Rammohun Roy belongs to this period. His letter to Lord Amherst in 1832 is a striking example of the awakening of the intelligentsia towards English education. We moved on to the stage subsequent to the Sepoy Rising to survey the development of English education during this stage. We noted the impact of the Wood's Despatch on education in the country. That was the period of the introduction of the railway and, the introduction of the telegraph. With the distance being abridged, there has been a growing need for a common language that would be able to reach out to all sections of the vast sub-continent. We noted that the desire for English education was on the increase among the new generation of Indians. There appeared a group of Indian poets and prose writers who had the command of the English language and produced great works in English. In the third stage, the post-independence stage, we discussed the status of English in India by referring to the University Education Commission, the Secondary Education Commission known as the Mudaliar Commission, the Report of the Official Language Commission in 1956 and a few other issues relating to the development of English in independent India.

Next, we went on to examine the concept of communicative competence in terms of two concepts propounded by Chomsky namely competence and performance. We noted that competence is the grammatical knowledge of a language user that is commonly not conscious or available for spontaneous report while linguistic performance is most explicitly understood as concerned with the processes often termed encoding and decoding.

We then took up the issues on the sources and causes of L2 learners' errors beginning with a critical observation on contrastive analysis by stating that L1 transfer is not the only source of errors; there are other sources, a few of which we referred to. Then we moved on to examining a few techniques of error analysis finally, we ended the unit with a discussion on the concept of interlanguage.

14.3 ELT: A HISTORICAL OVERVIEW

English is one of the most widely spoken languages in the world today. The English-speaking world can broadly be divided into the following areas:

- North America covering the regions of the United States and Canada.
- The British Isles, the home of the English language covering the regions of England, Scotland, Wales and Northern Ireland and the Republic of Ireland.
- Australia and New Zealand
- South Asia covering the regions of India, Pakistan, Bangladesh, Nepal and Sri Lanka.
- Far East covering the regions of Singapore, Malaysia, Hong Kong.
- The Caribbean region
- South Africa, West and East Africa.

Each region has its own distinct history of the use of English and the teaching of English. Our concern here would be limited to a historical overview of English teaching in India, which is linked to the arrival of the East India Company in 1600.

14.3.1 The Exposure of the Country to English

The period from 1600, the year of establishment of the East India Company (EIC) till 1800, may be taken as the period of exposure of the country to the English language. The EIC established settlements in Madras, Calcutta and Bombay. By the end of the eighteenth century, the Company controlled virtually a sizeable portion of the subcontinent. The administration of the country rested in the hands of a band of British administrators, army officers, educators and missionaries with the association of a small number of Indians who acted as the link between the British administrators and the common persons.

However, there was no formal teaching in India during the pre-Macaulay period and whatever English teaching was there was

restricted to the children of the East India Company officials, a few Indians not only learnt the language but also started contributing literary works. Henry Derozio (1809—1831), Kaliprosad Ghose (1809 –1873) and Michael Madhusudhan Dutt (1827 – 1873) were three of the well-known poets who wrote prior to Macaulay's *Minute.*

However, in Calcutta there was a great movement for English education. A reform movement was taking shape in Bengal spearheaded by Raja Rammohun Roy (1772 -1833) who had acquired English education and entered the service of the East India Company as Dewan or Sheristadar. By1815 he had formed a circle of followers and impressed upon them the idea that the first and foremost need of his fellow countrymen was a more modern system of education, adapted to the needs of modern conditions. It is well known that he himself founded and helped others in founding schools. He took a prominent part in the educational controversy between the "Orientalists" and the "Anglicists" and sided with the latter. His letter on English Education to the Governor General of British India, Lord Amherst in 1832 for an enlightened system of education was written twelve years before Macaulay wrote his famous *Minute*.

14.3.2 The First Stage of English Teaching

The name of Charles Grant, an official of EIC is associated as a pioneer in the teaching of English in India. In 1792, he suggested the need for "planting" the English language in those "territories of the country' for the dissemination of European literature and sciences through the medium of English. Grant's suggestion was accepted later by the Government of William Bentinck as a result of which a formal programme of English studies was introduced in India in the first half of the nineteenth century. The year 1835 can be taken as the official date of introduction of the teaching of English in India, the date when the teaching of English was officially sanctioned by the British Government:

"The great object of the British government ought to be the promotion of European literature and sciences among the natives of India and that all the funds appropriated for the purpose of education would be best employed in English education alone."

It was in 1835 that Thomas Babington Macaulay, Chairman of the Governor General's Council and President of the Committee of Public Instructions had presented to the Government his famous *Minute on Indian Education (1835)*.

Macaulay's educational *Minute* made it abundantly clear that he saw the teaching of English, far from replacing the vernaculars, as a channel for the transmission of European knowledge into the vernaculars and through them down to the wide mass of the Indian population. However, the vernaculars must grow organically out of the new learning, rather than by government paying a few authors to produce books in those languages. "Twenty years hence, there will be hundreds, nay thousands of natives familiar with the best models of composition and well acquainted with western science," he predicted. "Among them some persons will be found who will have the inclination and the ability to exhibit European knowledge in the vernacular dialects."

Thus, Macaulay provides the assurance that the new educational policy for India will not only increase the efficiency of the colonial government by creating a class of people who would be well versed in the art of speaking and writing English. It would be a class of people who could be employed in the lower rungs of British administration. As he had predicted, by 1838, when he sailed back to Britain, his Committee had established forty English medium schools which were open to all regardless of caste, in itself a revolutionary step in a society where the lower castes had been strictly forbidden to study.

The year 1854 is significant for English education in India. It was in this year that the Colonial Government announced its famous Wood's Despatch, which was the first educational policy of EIC.

Three years later, in 1857, three universities were established in Bombay, Calcutta and Madras where English studies were introduced for the first time in the sense that Oxford introduced English Literature as a subject only in 1894 and Cambridge in 1911. The year 1857 was also the year of the Sepoy Rising that brought the curtains down on the East India Company and in 1858 the Indian sub-continent came directly under the British Crown.

14.3.3 The Second Stage of English Teaching

The second stage of English teaching began subsequent to the Sepoy Rising of 1857 when a year later in 1858, India came directly under the Crown of England. The Despatch of Charles Wood of 1854 was confirmed in 1859 and the grants-in-aid system was introduced and the Education Department was established as a separate administrative unit. Charles Wood advocated for a system of education in India where the mother tongue would be the base, but English would dominate at the higher levels of education.

Earlier in 1853, the first railway was opened in India and in 1854; the first telegraph line and a modern postal system were inaugurated. Distance was being abridged and a common medium of communication was being established at the higher levels. These factors brought in a growing need for a language that would be able to reach out to all sections of the vast sub-continent. With the rise of a nationalist fervour after the Rising, it was felt that the language of the Nationalist Movement has to be an Indian language. At the same time, the desire for English education was on the increase among the new generation of Indians and a "long dormant intellectual and critical impulse was quickened into sudden life, a new efflorescence was visible everywhere and the reawakened Indian spirit went forth to meet the violent challenge of values of modern science and civilization of the west" (K.R.S. Iyengar).

It was around the same period there appeared a group of Indian poets and prose writers who had the command of the English

language and produced great works in English. Bankim Chandra Chatterjee, for example produced his major work *Rajmohan's Wife* in English. But, he was fluent in Bengali also. This stage was a very productive stage not only for Indian writings but also for Indian writings in English. Sri Aurobindo, Mulk Raj Anand, Raja Rao and R.K Narayan were the earliest bestselling writers writing in English during the latter part of the nineteenth century.

14.3.4 The Third Stage of English in India

The third stage is the post-independence stage, a crucial stage for the English language in the multilingual climate of independent India. The status of English in India was debated upon at a national level and in 1948 soon after independence, the University Education Commission with Dr. S. Radhakrishnan as Chairman recommended Hindi as medium of instruction with the continuation of English.

In 1950 the Constitution of India granted English the status of Associate Official Language and was to be used in that capacity till 1965. In 1952-53, the Secondary Education Commission known as the Mudaliar Commission recommended that English and Hindi be introduced at the middle school level and the medium of instruction be the regional language/mother tongue till secondary school level. However, the Report of the Official Language Commission in 1956, presented a dismal scenario of literacy in contemporary India. It was reported that literacy in English constituted 6.41% of total literacy and only 1.06% of the total population recognizes the value of English as 'pipeline' within the country and 'window' to the rest of the world.

In 1961 the National Council of Educational Research and Training (NCERT) was formed wherein in a conference of Chief Ministers recommended the three-language formula at school. In 1963, the Official Language Act was passed and it was recommended for the continuance of English as an Associate Official Language even after 1965, without any time limit. In 1964-1966, the

Indian Education Commission, known as the Kothari Commission, confirmed the three-language formula – use of English as library language and as the medium of instruction at university level. The continuance of English as alternative language and medium of instruction at higher levels was reiterated by the National Education Policy of 1968. The recommendations regarding the teaching of English of the 1968 policy has been reiterated by the 1986 policy. It however recommended for the setting up of schools and colleges and universities in rural areas with the objective of identifying and promoting excellence.

Today there has been a lot of opportunities for the teaching and learning of English from the school level up to the higher levels of education. Central and State Universities, Autonomous Colleges, Open Universities and Open Schools, national and state level Boards and Councils of school education, NCERT at a national level and SCERTs at state levels are some of the state and national agencies that have been contributing to the teaching and learning of English in India. Globalization in the field of education has opened the doors for international agencies to contribute to the development of ELT both through the print and electronic media including Google.



CHECK YOUR PROGRESS

Q 1: Answer the following questions.

(a) Briefly discuss Raja Rammohun Roy's contribution to the introduction of English education in India.

(b) Briefly state the objectives of the British colonial government underlying the spread of English in India.

(c) Briefly discuss the role of Macaulay's *Minute* with reference to the spread of English in India.

(d) What is the three language formula?

14.4 COMMUNICATIVE COMPETENCE

In *Aspects of the Theory of Syntax* (1965) Noam Chomsky observes that "linguistic theory is concerned primarily with an ideal speaker or listener in a completely homogeneous speech community that knows its language perfectly and is unaffected by such grammatically irrelevant conditions as memory limitations, distractions, shifts of attention and interests and errors in applying his knowledge of the language in actual performance." The statement draws our attention to the following phrases:

1. that knows its language, and
2. applying his knowledge of the language in actual performance.

The first phrase refers to *linguistic competence*, a knowledge of the language system. The second phrase refers to the use of the language, the *linguistic performance.* Linguistic competence is understood as concerned with the tacit knowledge of language structure. It is the grammatical knowledge that is commonly not conscious or available for spontaneous report, but necessarily implicit in what the ideal speaker-listener can say. On the other hand, *linguistic performance* is most explicitly understood as concerned with the processes often termed encoding and decoding of meaning in an exchange that takes place between speakers.

Such a theory of competence is seen as independent of the socio-cultural features that are required for suitable speech in the environment of the child to develop. Socio-cultural features refer to those features in a social context that prompts a speaker with the notions of what to say, when to say and how to say something that is appropriate and feasible for a given situation. The theory of performance is the one sector that might have a specific socio-cultural content.

In order to appreciate the concepts of competence and performance, we may refer to the concepts of *langue* and *parole* propounded by Saussure. (Refer to 3.4.2 in this course) Saussure refers to langue as the abstract knowledge of the language system that is possessed by and used by all members of a speech community and parole as the concrete manifestation of the language through either speech or writing. However, Chomsky's view

of competence and performance goes beyond Saussure's conception of the two terms. The concept of competence in the larger context of communication or communicative competence has to be seen as an overall underlying linguistic knowledge and ability and thus it includes concepts of appropriateness and acceptability – socio-cultural notions which are associated with performance. The study of communicative competence thus entails consideration of such variables as attitude, motivation and a number of socio-cultural factors.

There are several sectors of communicative competence, of which grammaticality and appropriateness are two major areas of language use. In this context, we refer to a noted sociolinguist Dell Hymes who examines the concept of communicative competence by listing four sectors, which are as follows:

- The first sector of communicative competence is whether (and to what degree) something is formally possible. This is roughly equivalent to Chomsky's notion of grammaticality. It is concerned with whether a language permits a structure as grammatical (possible). We can say for example that 'the mouse that the cat chased and killed and ate had a white tail'. It is a grammatical sentence.
- The second sector of communicative competence is whether (and to what degree) something is feasible in virtue of the means of implementation available. The notion of feasibility entails that a sentence like' the mouse, the cat, the dog, the man, the woman married, beat, chased ate had a white tail' is grammatically possible but lacks feasibility.
- The third sector of communicative competence covers appropriateness — whether (and to what degree) something is appropriate (adequate) in relation to a context in which it is used and evaluated. The speaker-listener's underlying competence includes rules of appropriateness; a sentence can be grammatically possible and feasible but inappropriate to a context or situation.
- The fourth sector relates to the area, which we commonly refer to as accepted usage. It concerns whether (and to what degree) something

is in fact done, actually performed, and what its doings entails. A sentence may be possible, feasible, appropriate and not occur.

The concept of communicative competence provides us with an explanation on how a child acquires language. A normal child acquires knowledge of sentences, not only as grammatical, but also as appropriate. He or she acquires competence as to when to speak, when not, and also what to talk about with whom, when, where, in what manner. In short, a child becomes able to accomplish a stock of speech acts, to take part in speech events and to evaluate their accomplishment by others. This competence, moreover, is integral with attitudes, values, and motivations concerning language, its features and uses. These are rules of language use without which the rules of grammar would appear useless. The internalization of attitudes towards the use of a language is particularly important. They contribute to the communicative competence of the child using the language in a natural situation.



CHECK YOUR PROGRESS

Q 2: Write short notes on the following terms:

(a) linguistic competence

(b) linguistic performance

(c) acceptability

(d) langue and parole

14.5 CONTRASTIVE ANALYSIS

Contrastive analysis is a field of study related to second language acquisition theories. These theories traditionally have been the offspring of general linguistic theory, sometimes supplemented by insights from psycholinguistics. One of the major areas of L2 acquisition is the notion that L2 learners are often influenced by the features of their first language in the process of learning a second language. The term language transfer is used to refer to this notion of influence of the learners' first language in L learning. The errors that L2 learners often make, has been taken as base for such a study. A contrastive analysis (CA) of the errors of these learners

is a field of study that has been guided by the theoretical assumptions of the structural approach and the behaviourist theory of language learning developed and practised in the 1950s and 1960s

14.5.1 Language Transfer

The term language transfer presupposes the notion that sentences in the target language may exhibit interference from the mother tongue. This of course was considered to be the major source of errors of L2 users of the language. Contrastive analysis refers to a comparison of the linguistic systems of two languages, for example the sound system or the grammatical system followed by an analysis of the distinctive features of the learners' L1 and L2. The history and theoretical origins of CA in behaviourist psychology are reviewed by researchers like Dulay and Burt (1977) who have found that one third of deviant sentences of L2 learners could be attributed to language transfer. Thus, CA works by predicting errors by comparing the linguistic systems of the mother tongue and the L2.

The major assumption of CA is that while learning a new language a substantial number of the errors made by the learner can be due to the interference coming from the learners' first language (L1). This phenomenon referred to as *the pull of the mother tongue* implies that when learners acquire their L1 /mother tongue they begin as it were, with a clean slate. In course of time, the phonological, syntactic and semantic features of the language get impressed in their minds. When they begin to learn a second language (L2), they carry over the phonological, syntactic and semantic features of their L1 into their target language (L2) performance resulting in language transfer. Thus, it has been hypothesized by CA that the errors of L2 learners are chiefly due to the differences between the structural patterns or the sound pattern of their L1 and L2. The greater these differences are, the more acute the learning difficulties will be. Learners' deviation in the use of language from the norm of the L2 occurs because of their bilingual

or multilingual habits accounting for their familiarity with more than one language. This assumption had led to the argument that a contrastive analysis of the structural framework of the two languages is needed to predict and to make explicit the difficulties and errors of L2 learners.

14.5.2 Intralingual Interference

Research findings have provided the evidence that language transfer is not the only source of errors made by L2 learners thereby pointing at the shortcomings of the CA hypothesis. Studies have shown that some errors produced by the learner reflect not the structures of the learners' first language but generalizations based on partial exposure to the L2. In an analysis of English errors produced by speakers of a multitude of unrelated languages representing several language families, Jack C Richards noted subcategories of error types, which seem to be common to speakers of diverse languages as they develop hypothesis about the structure of English. The errors point to the fact that like the first language learner, the L2 learner tries to derive the rules behind the data to which he has been exposed, and may develop hypothesis that may correspond neither to the mother tongue nor the target language.

14.5.3 Other Sources of Errors

Besides intralingual interference, the sociolinguistic situation may result in different degrees and types of language learning and consequently errors that has to be traced back to other sources. Included here are thus the effects of the learner's particular motivations for learning the L2 as well as the socio-linguistic setting. In certain socio-linguistic settings, the learner will be more motivated to learn the language than in other settings.

Similarly, the modality of exposure to the L2 and the modality of production may affect L2 learning and consequently the sources of errors made by L2 learners. Production and perception may involve

the acquisition of two partially overlapping systems. Very often mixing of syntactic forms and sounds of the learners' mother tongue is observed in the production of their L2.

However, there still remains the value of CA. Though the automatic transfer of L1 structure due to habit onto the structure of the L2 is virtually non-existent, studies of L2 acquisition have tended to imply that CA may be most predictive at the level of speech production. It is logical that bilingual speakers tend to be influenced by the sound system of their L1 when they use L2 in oral communication.



CHECK YOUR PROGRESS

Q 3: Answer the following questions.

(a) What is contrasted in contrastive analysis?

(b) Explain the term pull of the mother tongue.

(c) Apart from L1 interference, name some other sources of L2 learners' errors.

(d) Where do we see the value of Contrastive Analysis more than in others?

14.6 ERROR ANALYSIS

In our discussion on L2, learners' errors in 14.5 above we focussed our attention on errors studied from the point of view of contrast. The claims made by contrastive analysis (CA) to predict and explain some major types of errors, have led to a serious interest in learners' errors. These interests have grown up primarily because errors have provided a meaningful feedback to the teaching-learning activities taking place in the L2 classrooms. They not only provided the basis for remedial teaching but more than that, they are seen as evidences of the levels of learning that takes place in the learner. Hence there has grown the need for undertaking serious studies on learners' errors of performance and errors of performance – two terms used by Pit Corder, in his paper titled "The Significance of Learners' Errors"(1967).

14.6.1 Types of Errors

It is a fact that no one expects a child learning his mother-tongue to produce from the beginning nothing but grammatically correct and appropriate sentences – sentences which an adult user of the language would possibly use. We interpret his 'incorrect' utterances as evidences that he is in the process of acquiring language. We take appositive view of the child's errors of performance, which include slips, lapses and mistakes.

Slips are made by a learner when writing or speaking and which result from a lack of attention, fatigue, carelessness or some other aspect of performance. We often refer to slip of the pen or slip of the tongue. We would not make these slips if we were a bit careful. Similarly, lapses and mistakes are also errors of performance that may often result from memory lapses, fatigue or emotional strain or even a failure to match the language to the situation resulting in inappropriate utterance. Errors of performance will characteristically be unsystematic and it is meaningless to formulate rules to overcome them.

Compared to errors of performance, the errors of competence of the learner will be systematic. Primarily, the significance of these errors is threefold.

(a) We obtain from them evidence of the system of the language that the learner is using or has learnt at a particular point in the course of learning.

(b) Secondly, they provide to the researcher evidence on how language is learnt or acquired, what strategies or procedure the learners are employing in the learning of the language.

(c) Thirdly, they are important to the learners themselves because they provide developmental evidence of language learning. This is the type of errors that belong to the scope of error analysis (EA).

14.6.2 Error Analysis as a Pedagogical Tool

The term error analysis has been considered a pedagogic tool as it has to do with the investigation of the language of L2 learners. Rather than making, an attempt to compare the linguistic features of the learners' L1 and L2, in EA it has been thought to be more relevant to study the learners' performance data so as to infer from it the nature of their competence and the process by which the language elements are acquired.

From the insights gained from such investigation, it has been possible to adopt the teaching materials, which facilitate the process of acquisition. The learners have been seen as constructing for themselves a grammar of the target language on the basis of linguistic data to which they are exposed and the exposure they receive from classroom teaching. With the newer insights gained from cognitive language learning theory and transformational generative grammar L2 learning has now been seen as a creative process of constructing a system in which learners are trying out hypotheses about the target language from a number of possible sources, limited knowledge of the target language, knowledge of communicative functions, knowledge of the L1 and so on.

14.6.3 Methodology of Error Analysis

It is now time to look in detail at examples of errors, which L2 learners produce. Careful analysis relating to the cause of learners' errors can provide guidance on various pedagogical issues. It is important to note that error analysis works by following a systematic methodology at these stages:

1. the identification or recognition of errors.
2. the description of the errors
3. explanation of the errors in terms of their source, cause and significance.

Each of these points has been taken up here.

1. *The identification or recognition of errors:* For this purpose, we shall take the following samples of language users' speech or composition. We can recognize the following sentences as erroneous:
   (a) *Rina is ill since four days.
   (b) *What you doing now?
   (c) *He did not found.
   (d) *We can took him out.
   (e) *He born in Delhi.
   (f) *The sky is cover with clouds.
2. *The description of the errors:* For this purpose, we shall take up the first two sentences only.
   (a) **Rina is ill since four days* is not acceptable. The acceptable form is: Rina has been ill for four days. It is basically an error of syntax; more specifically, an error in the use of the present perfect tense form of the verb. The use of the adverbs since/for is another error detected. The error can be classified as over-generalization
   (b) **What you doing now?* is not acceptable. The acceptable form is: What are you doing now? It is basically an error in the use of the verb form in interrogative constructions. The error can be classified as incomplete application to rules.
3. *Explanation of the errors in terms of their source, cause and significance:* In his description and explanation of the types of errors given above, Jack C Richards (1971) in his paper titled "A Non-contrastive Approach to Error Analysis" observes that an examination of these errors suggests that they reflect the general characteristics of learning the rules of grammar. These include over-generalization, ignorance of rule restriction, incomplete application of rules, false concepts hypothesized among others. Developmental errors illustrate the learners' attempting to build up hypotheses about features of the English

language from their limited experience of it in the classroom or through textbooks.

(a) Overgeneralization: The term covers instances where the learner makes errors on the basis of their experience of other structures in the L2. For example *We are walk to school every day is basically an error in the use of the verb form. The error is the result of a tendency to over-generalize the rules of grammar. Over-generalization generally involves the creation of one unacceptable sentence due to the false generalization of the grammatical input that the learner had acquired.

(b) *Ignorance of rule restriction:* The term covers instances where the learner fails to observe the restrictions of application of rules of grammar to contexts where they do not apply. For example:

- From *We talked about it*, in the analogy he produces *We discussed about it.
- From *He said to me,* he produces *He told to me.
- From *Ask him to do it*, he produces *Make him to do it.

(c) *Incomplete application to rule*s: under this category, we may note the occurrence of structures, which show that the learner is in the process of acquiring acceptable forms. For example, earner has acquired the statement from which he uses wrongly in the question form by producing sentences like

- *When you are coming?
- *Why you are late?

(d) *False concepts hypothesised:* Under this category, we include errors that are produced from faulty comprehension of distinction in the L2. Examples include

- *He was helped me.
- *She is comes to school regularly.

The relevance of a study of L2 learners' errors for language teaching is considerable. So far all incorrect forms produced by the learner we have termed 'errors'. We need to analyse them and identify the sources and causes of the errors and to use this knowledge for pedagogic purposes.



CHECK YOUR PROGRESS

Q 4: Comment on the following errors:

(a) Neither Mohan nor his brother were present.

(b) I knew him for a year.

(c) Sanskrit is not easy to be learnt.

(d) I found a handbag crossing the road.

(e) What you are doing here?

14.7 INTERLANGUAGE

The term *interlanguage* is used to refer to the type of language produced by L2 learners who are in the process of learning a language. In sections 14.5, we discussed a number of sources and causes of errors made by L2 users of English. For example, we had noted that in L2 learning, the learner inevitably makes errors whose sources and causes can be ascribed to the following factors:

- Language transfer
- Interlingual interference
- Sociolinguistic situation
- Modality in language learning.

In the present context, we are concerned with the interlingual interference as the source and cause of errors. Interlingual errors reflect various stages of language development of the learner. It claims that the learner processes new language data in his mind and produces rules for its production, based on the evidence. Where the data are inadequate or the evidence only partial, such rules may produce utterances such as the following:

(a) Rina is ill since four days.

(b) What you doing now?

(c) She told she was on holiday.

(d) She in my chair sitting.

(e) Dilip is knowing the answer.

In the above performance data of the L2 users, what appears relevant to us are:

(1) the linguistically near equivalent utterances in the learner's mother tongue (L1) produced by the learner,

(2) the utterances made by the L2 learner which appears rather deviant from a grammatical standpoint (interlanguage or IL),

(3) the same utterances considered to be grammatically acceptable in the target language (TL).

These three sets of utterances or behavioural events are then the relevant data of second language learning. A theoretical prediction in a relevant psychology of L2 learning will be the basis which establish the knowledge of IL behaviour. At this point, we have to revisit the different sources and causes of the errors made which had formed the theme of our discussion in 14.5 and 14.6 above.



14.8 LET US SUM UP

We began this unit with a historical overview of ELT. We took note of the status of English as a world language by broadly dividing the areas globally where English has been used and then focussed our attention on the Indian context. We traced the history of the arrival of the British East India Company to India as the stage of exposure to English. We took note of the fact that the formal teaching of English began with the famous *Minute on Indian Education* of T.B. Macaulay. We noted that even in the pre-Macaulay times the Bengal renaissance had created a climate for the craze for learning the language. We referred to Raja Rammohun Roy whose letter to Lord Amherst in 1832 illustrates the awakening of the intelligentsia towards English education. We took up the stage subsequent to the Sepoy

Rising to survey the development of English education during this stage, which includes the impact of the Wood's Despatch on education in the country. We noted that the desire for English education was on the increase among the new generation of Indians. There appeared a group of Indian poets and prose writers who had the command of the English language and produced great works in English. In the third stage, the post-independence stage, we discussed the status of English in India by referring to the University Education Commission, the Secondary Education Commission known as the Mudaliar Commission, the Report of the Official Language Commission in 1956 and a few other issues relating to the development of English in independent India. Next, we went on to examine the concept of communicative competence in terms of two concepts propounded by Chomsky namely competence and performance. We then took up the issues on the sources and causes of L2 learners' errors beginning with a critical observation on contrastive analysis by stating that L1 transfer is not the only source of errors; there are other sources, a few of which we referred to. Then we moved on to examining a few techniques of error analysis in terms of the identification or recognition of errors, the description of the errors and explanation of the errors in terms of their source, cause and significance. Finally, we brought the unit to a close with a discussion on the concept of interlanguage.



14.9 FURTHER READING

1) Baker, J et al. (2008). *The English Teacher's Handbook.* Continuum, London & NY.
2) Hubbard, P. et al. (1983). *A Training Course for TEFL.* ELBS.
3) Krishnaswami, N. et al. (2003). *Teaching English.* Macmillan.
4) Masani, Zareer. (2012). *Macaulay.* Random House.
5) Nagaraj, Geetha. (2006). *English Language Teaching.* Orient Longman.

6) Richards, J.C. (1974). *Error Analysis.* Longman.

7) _____ et al. (2001). *Approaches and Methods in language Teaching.* Cambridge.

14.10 ANSWERS TO CHECK YOUR PROGRESS (HINTS ONLY)

Ans to Q 1:

(a) see 14.3.1

(b) see 14.3.2

(c) see 14.3.2.

(d) The Three language Formula is as follows:

1. The first language (L1) to be studied must be the mother tongue(MT) or the regional language (RL)
2. The second language (L2)

   (d) In Hindi speaking states the L1 will be some other modern Indian language or English

   (e) In non-Hindi speaking states, the L2 will be Hindi or English
3. The third language (L3)

   (a) In Hindi speaking states, the L3 will be English or an MIL not studies as L1

   (b) In non-Hindi speaking states L3 will be English or an MIL not studies as L2.

Ans to Q 2:

(a) See 14.4.

(b) See 14.4.

(c) See 14..4.

(d) See Unit 3 at 3.4.2.

Ans to Q 3:

(a) See 14.5.1

(b) See 14.5.1

(c) See 14.5.3

(d) See the last paragraph of sub section 14.5.3.

Ans to Q 4:

(a) to (e) Try yourself with inputs from 14.6.3.



14.11 POSSIBLE QUESTIONS

Q 1: Answer the following questions briefly.

(a) State the contribution of Charles Grant to English Education in India.

(b) Briefly state the recommendations of the Mudaliar Commission on English Education.

(c) Define intralingual interference

(d) Distinguish the two terms: competence and performance.

Q 2: Answer the following questions in about 100-150 words.

(a) Briefly state the objectives of the British colonial government underlying the spread of English education in India.

(b) Discuss the issues leading to the introduction of the Three Language Formula.

(c) Discuss the L1 interference hypothesis.

(d) Draw a distinction in the meanings of slips, mistakes and errors.

Q 3: Answer the questions in about 400 words.

(a) Give a brief history of English Education in India till the independence of India.

(b) Discuss the methodology underlying error analysis.

(c) Discuss the concept of communicative competence.

(d) Discuss the concept of interlanguage.

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UNIT 15: ENGLISH LANGUAGE TEACHING II

UNIT STRUCTURE

15.1 Learning Objectives

15.2 Introduction

15.3 Approaches, Methods and Techniques of Teaching English

15.4 Grammar Translation Approach

15.5 The Structural Approach

15.6 The Communicative Approach

15.7 Modern Approaches

15.8 Let us Sum up

15.9 Further Reading

15.9 Answers to Check Your Progress (Hints Only)

15.10 Possible Questions

15.1 LEARNING OBJECTIVES

After going through his unit, you will be able to

- appreciate the different approaches to the teaching of English
- explain the concepts of approach, method and technique
- evaluate the merits of different approaches of English Teaching
- form ideas about the modern approaches to language teaching.

15.2 INTRODUCTION

This is the second unit on English Language Teaching and also the last unit of the Course on Language, Linguistics and Grammar. We began this unit by discussing the three hierarchically related concepts of approach, method and technique. We discussed *approach* as the theoretical basis of language and language teaching that can be seen in terms of three different theoretical views of language and the nature of language namely, the structural view, the functional view and the interactional view. We then discussed method as an overall plan for the orderly presentation of language material, no part of which contradicts, and all of

which is based upon a definite approach. Next, we discussed technique as that which actually takes place in a classroom, as a particular strategy used to accomplish an immediate objective. We argued that techniques must be consistent with a method, and therefore in harmony with an approach as well and that the technique that a method advocates often serves to distinguish methods. Then, we took up the grammar translation approach by referring to its German origin while in India it was the first of the approaches to be introduced in vernacular medium schools of the country that continued till the implementation of the National Education Policy of 1968 when a total restructuring of the school curriculum was recommended. We discussed the various features of this approach after which we took up the structural approach that came into being as an alternative to the direct method of teaching English as a second language.

We discussed the genesis of this approach in the English Language Institute of Michigan University in the United States with the objective of training teachers of English to teach English as a foreign language or as a second language. We discussed the implementation of this approach in India that had required a striking departure of various aspects of pedagogy from the grammar translation approach in the goals of teaching the language, areas of classroom technique, textbooks and other allied aspects.

We next moved on to the communicative approach to the teaching of English, which is essentially seen as a departure from the behaviourist paradigm of the structural approach by involving both a cognitive and behaviourist paradigm in its theory and practice. We discussed issues like communicative syllabus design, communicative methodology and the role of the teacher in the communicative classroom. We had seen the communicative approach as a departure from the structural approach from a form-based approach to a meaning-based approach, from a structural syllabus to a notional-functional syllabus and a learner-centred approach in classroom teaching through a variety of communicative activities.

We concluded the unit by making brief references to two of the recent approaches of ELT namely the Natural Approach and the approach known as content-based instruction, the first one propounded by Krashen

and Terrel who had viewed language as a vehicle for communicating meanings and messages and observed that acquisition can take place only when people can understand messages in the target language. The other approach, Content Based Instruction (CBI) refers to an approach to L2 teaching in which teaching is organized around the contents or information that the learners will acquire, rather than around a language item. There are other recent approaches like task-based language teaching and a few others, but they have not been included in this unit for discussion.

15.3 APPROACHES, METHODS AND TECHNIQUES OF TEACHING ENGLISH

It is customary to discuss language teaching in terms of three related aspects. They are *approach, method* and *technique*. The terms are hierarchical. The organizational key is that techniques carry out a method, which is consistent with an approach. Here we shall attempt to elaborate these three concepts beginning with the term approach.

15.3.1 Approach

The term 'approach' is used to refer to a set of correlative assumptions dealing with the nature of language teaching and learning. An approach is the theoretical basis of language teaching. The term can be defined as a set of correlative assumptions dealing with the language and the nature of the subject matter to be taught. An approach forms the basis of any method to be formulated. Having said that an approach is the theoretical basis of language and language teaching, we need to elaborate on it. We can identify three theoretical bases of approach.

The first and the most traditional view is the *structural view,* the view that language is a system of structurally related elements for the coding of meaning. The goal of language learning is the mastery of elements of this system, which are generally defined in terms of the following components:

(a) phonological units: phonemes

(b) grammatical units : words, phrases, clauses and sentences

(c) grammatical operations: synthesis, transformation, passivization etc. of sentences

(d) lexical items: function words, content word etc.

The structural approach embodies this particular view of language. This approach is characterised by a systematic formulation of principles that can guide language teaching. It contains assumptions and beliefs about the language and language learning in specific terms.

The second view of language is the functional view, the view that language is a vehicle for the expression of functional meaning. The communicative movement in language teaching subscribes to this view of language. This theory emphasises the semantic and communicative dimension rather than merely the grammatical characteristics of language and leads to a specification and organization of language teaching content by categories of meaning and function rather than by elements of structure and grammar.

The third view can be called the interactional view. It sees language as the vehicle for the realization of interpersonal relations and for the performance of social transactions between individuals. Language is seen as a means for the creation and maintenance of social relations. Interactional approaches to language teaching include conversational analysis and discourse analysis. Interactional theories focus on patterns of moves and speech acts used in conversational exchange. Other areas of language teaching covered under this view include the Natural Approach and Task Based Teaching Approach mention of which will be made in 15.7 below.

15.3.2 Method

Method is an overall plan for the orderly presentation of language material, no part of which contradicts, and all of which is based upon the selected approach. In other words, method is the

level at which theory is put into practice and at which choices are made about the particular skills to be taught, and the order in which the content will be presented. Different theories of language and language learning influence the focus of a method. They determine what a method sets out to achieve. Some methods focus primarily on oral skills, say that reading and writing are secondary, and derive from transfer of oral skills. Then some methods set out to teach general communication skills and give greater priority to the ability to express oneself meaningfully and to make oneself understood than to grammatical accuracy or perfect pronunciation. However, the fact remains that all methods of language teaching involve the use of the target language.

W. F. Mackey in a paper titled “The Meaning of Method” had outlined a model of language teaching analyses that concentrates on the dimensions of (a) selection, (b) gradation and (c) presentation. All methods, therefore must consciously or unconsciously, select, grade and present their material. These three dimensions are justified below:

- First, he states that any method needs a selection because it is impossible to teach a whole of a field of knowledge – we are forced to teach the part of it we wish to teach.
- Secondly, we need to undertake grading because it is impossible to teach all of which we selected at once – we are forced put something before or after something else.
- Thirdly, he states that we need to focus upon presentation because it is impossible to teach without communicating something to somebody.

When Mackey developed this model in the 50s of the last century, obviously he had the Structural or audio-lingual approach in mind. Those were the times for these approaches and Mackey’s views on method throw light on the nature of the approach.

However, the model does not throw any light on the actual classroom behaviours of teachers and learners, which is of

significance in communicative methodology. In such methodology, the role of teachers and learners need to be addressed. In the case of a student-centred classroom, it becomes necessary to create situations for natural communication to take place. This is a goal of the communicative approach. In such a method, the teacher's roles and the students' roles are very well defined. The underlying theory is that students cannot be taught. They can only be helped to learn. The method employed in a student-centred classroom is that the teacher's role is to help and encourage students to develop their skills, but without the teacher relinquishing the more traditional role as a source of information, advice and knowledge. In a student-centred classroom, the students and the teacher are a team working together. Together their role is to make sure everyone benefits from the lesson, supporting one another.

15.3.3 Technique

A technique relates to what actually takes place in a classroom. It can be defined as a particular strategy used to accomplish an immediate objective. Techniques must be consistent with a method, and is therefore in harmony with an approach as well. The objectives of a method have to be realized through the techniques employed. Techniques that focus on grammatical accuracy as goal may be quite different from techniques that focus upon communication skills. The technique that a method advocates often serves to distinguish methods. The structural approach uses presentation and practise of dialogues and pattern-practise drills as classroom techniques.

A communicative methodology would employ different classroom techniques altogether. For example, two of the techniques of a communicative methodology have been mentioned here:

(a) The information transfer principle – a technique of transferring information provided in one form to another form.

(b) The information gap principle–the technique of supplying

information in authentic situations by creating conditions of unexpectedness.

The notion of classroom techniques as a central activity in classroom interaction has been the core of lesson planning designed by the teacher. The instructional objectives for a given level of instruction can be designed into classroom techniques to achieve the desired instructional goal.



CHECK YOUR PROGRESS

Q 1: Answer the following questions.

(a) Define the term 'approach' and illustrate it with an example.

(b) Define the term 'method' and illustrate it with an example.

(c) Define the term 'technique' and illustrate it with an example.

(d) Explain the term 'information gap principle'.

15.4 GRAMMAR TRANSLATION APPROACH

The *grammar translation approach* had its origin in Germany and was popular from the 1840s to the 1940s. However, in India the approach was the first of the approaches to be introduced in vernacular medium schools of the country and continued till the implementation of the *National Education Policy* of 1968 when a total restructuring of the school curriculum was recommended.

15.4.1 Classroom Methodology

As the name suggests, the approach attempts to organize a strategy of L2 teaching in which classroom activities involve the extensive use of the grammar of the target language (the language that is learnt) in the learning process and that after the grammar is internalized, the learner then has to translate sentences and passages from the learners' L1 to L2 and vice versa. However, what is of immediate interest is that while designing the approach for the

teaching of an L2, a number of salient features have been identified, a few of which have been discussed below.

The most noticeable aspect of the approach is the classroom methodology adopted for teaching English as L2. The English classes are invariably taught in the learners' mother tongue. The teacher is the active participant who provides all the required information to the learners who remain passive receivers of information. Learners are provided with little opportunities for the active use of the target language.

15.4.2 Types of Reading Texts

On the other hand, the textbooks contain *ungraded reading passages*, which are used for reading and translating them into the mother tongue or L1 of the learner. The word 'ungraded' means that the reading passages used for the textbooks usually contain long extracts from great writers. For example, in the schools of Assam till the 1970s when the approach was in vogue, students of class IX - X were required to read unabridged texts of Charles and Mary Lamb, Washington Irving and even Leo Tolstoy among others. The activities included the learners' engagement with the text in English, which was the target language and translating the lines into the learners' L1 or mother tongue. A related activity in handling the textbook was the teaching of vocabulary, which formed an important activity in this approach. The prescribed reading passages were used for an elaborate vocabulary learning activity. Much vocabulary was taught in the form of lists of words and their bilingual meanings in isolation.

15.4.3 The Teaching of Grammar

A major area of concern in L2 teaching through the grammar-translation approach is the prescriptive teaching of formal grammar. Long elaborate explanations of the intricacies of grammar are given.

Grammar provides the rules for putting words together in the structure of sentences. Classroom instruction often focuses on

- memorizing the parts of speech including their definitions,
- preparation of elaborate conjugation tables of verbs in the affirmative, negative, interrogative and negative-interrogative forms;
- parsing of words in different types of sentences,
- learning the rules for passive forms,
- narration of sentences
- analysis of clauses
- synthesis of sentences and
- Translation of sentences or short passages from the mother-tongue into English.

15.4.4 Writing Composition Tasks

Apart from explaining the lessons or the grammatical terms in the mother tongue and to ensuring that learners are also able to do the same thing, the teacher also had the task to develop some writing or composition tasks. These include essay writing, story writing, writing personal letters or applications to the head master, and so on. Besides the classroom, work includes drills and exercises in translating disconnected sentences from target language into mother tongue. Little or no attention is given to pronunciation.



CHECK YOUR PROGRESS

Q 2: Answer the following questions

(a) State the type of reading texts used for teaching through the grammar translation approach.

(b) Explain the term ‘conjugation of verbs’ with an example.

(c) Describe the nature of the classroom methodology through this approach.

(d) Explain ‘prescriptive teaching of grammar’.

15.5 THE STRUCTURAL APPROACH

The structural approach came into being as an alternative to the direct method of teaching English as a second language. The approach had its genesis in the English Language Institute of Michigan University in the United States with the objective of training teachers of English to teach English as a foreign language or as a second language. Charles Fries, the director of the institute and his colleagues felt that grammar or the structure ought to be the starting point for the teaching of a language. The structure of the language was identified with its basic sentence patterns and grammatical structures. The language was taught by intensive oral drilling of the basic sentence patterns. Systematic attention was paid to pronunciation. Teaching techniques concentrated on repetition of a pattern a number of times so that the learner became perfect in the use of the pattern. It became a popular approach in many parts of the world including India.

15.5.1 Language Skills

However, in most states of India, the structural approach was introduced in schools only after the implementation of the NEP (1968) in the later part of the 70s thereby replacing the grammar-translation approach. The most significant departure of the structural approach from the grammar-translation approach is that for the first time, language learning has been recognized as the development of skills. These skills include the skills of listening, speaking, reading and writing. Thus, with the focus on the development of skills syllabuses have been developed so as to ensure that at a given period of instruction, the learner is able to:

- understand English when spoken at a normal, conversational speed,
- speak the language,
- read different kinds of texts, and
- write different kinds of compositions.

15.5.2 Selection and Gradation

Secondly, the textbook materials used for the structural approach shows a striking departure from those used in the grammar-translation approach. A significant aspect of the structural approach is the selection and gradation of vocabulary and structures. It has been recommended that the number of vocabulary items would be around 2,700 out of which about 1,200 will constitute the active vocabulary and the remaining the passive vocabulary of the learner. Similarly, around 300 structural patterns have been identified which would be graded so as to decide upon the amount of language material to be given at a definite stage of instruction in a five or six year school course. Such an approach would limit the language material to a manageable number of structures and words.

15.5.3 Situational Teaching

Thirdly, the structural approach considers language to be primarily speech. Hence, the classroom techniques require that the selected structures and vocabulary are to be presented and practised orally. It is important that sufficient opportunities are to be given to learners to practice the structures in meaningful situations and to make them use them in situations, which may be real or contrived.

Real situations are those, which the learner experiences directly at the time of learning, for example the classroom situation. In a real situation, the teacher can demonstrate some action or show visuals and relate the actions or visuals to certain structures that they are required to learn. (e.g. *She is reading a book.*) Real situations can also be developed by recalling some experiences at home or elsewhere and enabling learners to practise a given structure e.g. *How did you come to school today?*

Contrived situations are those situations that cannot be linked with the learners' direct experience. These situations can be created by the use of teaching aids like flash cards, phonic cards, charts

and even the blackboard, which a resourceful teacher can meaningfully use by making sketches or in the lower classes showing learners the proper strokes of the letters of the alphabet among others. In oral practice, great attention is given to the pronunciation of the learner and a lot of remediation of phonemes, stress and intonation has to go with the activity.

15.5.4 Drills

Fourthly, in instruction through the structural approach, there is little or no grammatical explanation; grammar is taught by inductive analogy rather than by deductive explanation. Structures are drilled in chorus or through tasks like pattern-practice drills, substitution table drills and other kinds of drills where learners get the opportunity to practice a given structure. Pattern practice drills can be organized by providing inputs requiring learners to carry out *imitation drills, substitution drills, addition drills, transformation drills question-answer drills* among others. *Substitution table drills* are designed by placing words of different classes (nouns, verbs etc.) in different columns of a table requiring learners to produce a large number of sentences from the table.



CHECK YOUR PROGRESS

Q 4: Answer the following questions.

(a) Explain the language skills.

(b) State the importance of selection of vocabulary.

(c) State the importance of gradation of structures.

(d) Define pattern-practice drill.

15.6 THE COMMUNICATIVE APPROACH

The Communicative Approach to language teaching called Communicative Language teaching is essentially a departure from the behaviourist paradigm of the structural approach by involving both a cognitive

and behaviourist paradigm in its theory and practice. The cognitive aspect involves the internalization of plans for creating appropriate language behaviour. There is emphasis on communication, or *communicative competence*. The term; communicative competence' refers to the ability, not only to apply the grammatical rules of a language in order to form grammatically correct sentences, but also to know the time and situation — when and where to use these sentences appropriately.

15.6.1 Communicative Syllabus Design

The first point of departure from the structural approach is that the communicative approach is a development of language learning from a form-based approach to a meaning-based approach. To develop a pedagogic programme based on the communicative approach, the issue that appears to be uppermost is the syllabus inventory. D. A. Wilkins (1976), a former professor of the University of Reading had proposed a syllabus, which would reflect the aims of the communicative approach. He calls it a *notional-functional syllabus* in which he specified two categories of language items — notions (frequency, location, time etc.) and communicative functions (suggesting, instructing, complaining etc.). The difference between this syllabus and a structural syllabus is that while the structural syllabus contained a list of structures which the textbook writer developed into lessons for teaching through the structural approach, in the communicative approach specified lists of notions and functions and also indicated suitable structures which would express these notions and functions. An example of such a syllabus is given below.

Notional-Functional Syllabus

Notions/Functions	**Exponents**
1. Requesting	Could you...?
	I wonder if you could...
2. Suggesting	You should...

		You might....
3.	Advising	You must....
		You'll have to...
4.	Frequency	How often....?
		always, sometimes
5.	Location	in, under, at, on, upon,

A radical change in communicative syllabus design came from South India under the guidance of N.S. Prabhu. In 1979, he developed a learner-centred approach to language teaching at the Regional Institute of English in Bangalore. His approach is based on the approach that learning of forms is best carried out when attention is given to meaning. He therefore designed a *task-based syllabus*. The course was organized round a series of communicative tasks, which were graded in order of conceptual difficulty, beginning with very simple tasks like labelling and then moving to many more complex ones like map-making. The focus of the lesson was on completion of the tasks rather than learning the language. The general theory was that while the learners were completing the tasks, at a subconscious level of the mind, they could be developing a language system. As their internal grammar matures, their capacity to generate language strengthens and early errors and ungrammatical expressions are replaced by standard forms.

15.6.2 Communicative Methodology

In the communicative approach, several types of communicative activities have been proposed by way of methodology among which the information gap task is one. In this type of task, a situation is provided in which information is known by only some of the participants (A) in the task while it is denied to the others (B) in the group. The task involves B receiving the required information from A to complete the gap. Such activities can be organized through

- language games,
- role play,

- group work and
- pair work activities.

These activities show that in communicative methodology, language acquisition is seen as rule formation and not habit formation through tasks engaging learners to repeat language items for practice.

15.6.3 The Teacher

The primary role of the teacher in a communicative classroom is to make the classroom learner-centred. The term learner-centred classroom implies that the teacher is seen as a facilitator rather than a figure of absolute authority. The teacher's role is that of a facilitator of learning to take place. He/She creates learning situations through activities in which the following parameters are addressed:

- The importance of comprehension - especially listening comprehension - is emphasized.
- Errors are seen as an inevitable by-product of language learning; systematic study, interpretation and where possible – remediation are of concern.
- The written language skills (reading and writing) and the spoken language skills (listening and speaking) are viewed as being of equal importance rather than the former secondary and the latter primary.
- Repetition in and of itself is discouraged, silence is recognized as useful and often necessary.
- There is contextualization of all teaching points through the use of audiovisual aids, stories, or other appropriate means.
- The use of mother tongue and translation are permitted.

There is increased interest in the affective domain; the attitude of the teacher and student are seen as important, human sensitivity crucial of interaction a significant variable. Bilingual – bicultural proficiency is seen as an ideal goal.



CHECK YOUR PROGRESS

Q 4: Answer the following questions

(a) Explain the concept "notional-functional syllabus".

(b) Briefly discuss the concept of task-based syllabus.

(c) Explain 'role play'.

(d) Discuss a learner-centred classroom.

15.7 MODERN APPROACHES

Since the last quarter of the twentieth century, a lot of research has been going on in the field of ELT as a result of which a number of modern approaches, methods and techniques of ELT have made their appearances. A survey of a few of these approaches is presented here.

15.7.1 The Natural Approach

In 1977, Tracy Terell, a teacher of Spanish in California associated with Stephen Krashen, an applied linguist in the University of Southern California in elaborating a theoretical rationale for the new approach to ELT, which has been named the Natural Approach, drawing on Krashen's influential theory of L2 acquisition. Their combined statement on the principle and practices of the Natural Approach appeared in a book titled *The Natural Approach* in 1983. They reject earlier methods of language teaching, such as the Audio-lingual Approach, which viewed grammar as the central component of language. According to Krashen and Terrel, the major problem with these methods was that they were built not around actual theories of language acquisition, but theories of something else, for example, the structure of language. The importance of the vocabulary is stressed suggesting the view that a language is essentially its lexicon and only inconsequently the grammar that explains how the lexicon is exploited to produce meaning.

Krashen and Terrel viewed language as a vehicle for communicating meanings and messages. They observe that acquisition can take place only when people can understand messages in the target language. To achieve such a goal, their approach focuses upon both oral and written basic personal communication skills, and oral and written academic learning skills to form the cornerstone of the learning experience supported by a rich mix of classroom activities, involving a variety of topics and situations.

15.7.2 Content-Based Instruction

Content Based Instruction (CBI) refers to an approach to L2 teaching in which teaching is organized around the contents or information that the learners will acquire, rather than around a language item. The approach is defined as the teaching of content or information in the language being learnt with little or no direct or explicit effort to teach the language itself separately from the content being taught.

Although content is used with a variety of different meanings in language teaching, it most frequently refers to the substance or subject matter that we learn or communicate through language, rather than the language used to convey it. The National Curriculum Framework, 2005, had recommended CBI as a strategy for L2 development as follows:

“The relative success of English medium schools show that language is learnt when it is not taught as language, through exposure to meaningful context. Thus English must be seen in relation to other subjects; a language across curriculum is of particular relevance to primary education, and all teaching in a sense language teaching.” (p 39)

The proposal of NCF 2005 is essentially a proposal for CBT, which is grounded on the following two central principles:

1. People learn a second language more successfully when they use the language as a means of acquiring information rather that as an end in itself. The principle reflects one of the motivations for CBI that it leads to more effective language learning.
2. CBI better reflects learners' needs for learning a second language. This principle reflects the fact that many content-based programmes serve to prepare L2 learners for better language learning.

CBI anticipates a change in the role of the L2 teachers. They must be more than good language teachers. They must have a fair knowledge of the subject matter and able to elicit that knowledge from their students. On the other hand, the CBI learning materials are the materials that are used typically for teaching the content subjects like social science, environmental science and even general science.



15.8 LET US SUM UP

In this unit, which is the second unit on English Language Teaching, we discussed the following topics and issues of ELT. We began this unit by discussing the three hierarchically related concepts of approach, method and technique. We discussed *approach* as the theoretical basis of language and language teaching. We then discussed method as an overall plan for the orderly presentation of language material, no part of which contradicts, and all of which is based upon a definite approach. Next, we discussed technique as that which actually takes place in a classroom, as a particular strategy used to accomplish an immediate objective. We argued that techniques must be consistent with a method, and therefore in harmony with an approach as well and that the technique that a method advocates often serves to distinguish methods. Next, we took up the grammar translation approach as the first of the approaches to be introduced in

vernacular medium schools of India that continued till the implementation of the National Education Policy of 1968 when a total restructuring of the school curriculum was recommended. We discussed the various features of this approach after which we took up the structural approach that came into being as an alternative to the direct method of teaching English as a second language. We discussed the implementation of this approach in India as a striking departure of various aspects of pedagogy from the grammar translation approach in the goals of teaching the language, areas of classroom technique, textbooks and other allied aspects. We next moved on to the communicative approach to the teaching of English, which is essentially seen as a departure from the behaviourist paradigm of the structural approach by involving both a cognitive and behaviourist paradigm in its theory and practice. We discussed issues like communicative syllabus design, communicative methodology and the role of the teacher in the communicative classroom. We had seen the communicative approach as a departure from the structural approach from a form-based approach to a meaning-based approach, from a structural syllabus to a notional-functional syllabus and a learner-centred approach in classroom teaching through a variety of communicative activities. We concluded the unit by making brief references to two of the recent approaches of ELT namely the Natural Approach and the approach known as content-based instruction.



15.9 FURTHER READING

1) Baker, Joanna s al. (2008). *The English Teacher's Handbook.* Continuum.

2) Baruah, T.C. (1999). *The English Teacher's Handbook.* Sterling, New Delhi.

3) Johnson, Keith. (1983). *Communicative Syllabus Design and Methodology.* Pergamon.

4) Jones, Leo. (2007). *The Student-Centered Classroom.* Cambridge.

5) Nagaraj, Geetha. (1996). *English Language Teaching.* Orient

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6) NCERT. (2005). *National Curriculum Framework 2005.* NCERT, New Delhi.

7) Richards, J et al. (1985). *Longman Dictionary of Applied Linguistics.* Longman.

8) Richards, Jack et al. (2005). *Approaches and Methods in Language Teaching.* Cambridge.



15.10 ANSWERS TO CHECK YOUR PROGRESS (HINTS ONLY)

Ans to Q 1:

(a) see 15.3.1

(b) see 15.3.1

(c) see 15.3.3.

(d) Information gap is a technique in communicative language teaching in which certain classroom tasks are organized for pair work or group work activities. The principle underlying this technique is that the required information is known to only one of the participants in a pair work task or some in the group work task, which requires the other in the pair or others in the group to supply information to meet the gap.

Ans to Q 2:

(a) see 15.4.2.

(b) Conjugation is a way of presenting the different forms of both regular and irregular verb forms which follow the same pattern for changes in tense (past, present, future) person (1st,2nd and 3rd) or number (singular or plural) eg *I am taking. We are taking/ You are taking. You are taking/ He is taking, They are taking.*

(c) see 15.4.1

(d) Teaching rule-based grammar against functional grammar.

Ans to Q 3:

(a) see 15.5.1

(b) see 15.5.2

(c) The term 'gradation' refers to the arrangement of the content of a language course or a textbook in such a way that the simpler ones come first and through a gradual process the difficulty level of the contents are increased.

(d) see 15.5.4.

Ans to Q 4:

(a) see 5.6.1

(b) see 5.6.1

(c) Role-play refers to drama-like classroom activities in which students take the roles of different participants in a situation and act out what might typically happen in that situation. For example, to practise how to express complaints and apologies in English, learners might role-play a situation in which a customer in a shop returns a faulty article to the shop-person.

(d) Try yourself.



15.11 POSSIBLE QUESTIONS

Q 1: Give brief answers to the following questions

(a) Define the term 'approach'.

(b) State the three dimensions of method.

(c) Define the term 'target language'.

(d) Define 'language skills'.

Q 2: Answer the following questions:

(a) Explain the functional view of language.

(b) Briefly elaborate the inter-personal view of language.

(c) Briefly discuss the natural approach to language teaching.

(d) Explain the term 'content-based instruction'.

Q 3: Answer the following questions.

(a) Discuss the strengths and weaknesses of the grammar-translation approach.

(b) Critically evaluate the structural approach.

(c) Discuss critically the features of the notional-functional syllabus.

(d) Discuss a learner-centred classroom showing how tasks are organized.

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