PGEG S2 02

KRISHNA KANTA HANDIQUI STATE OPEN UNIVERSITY

SEMESTER 2

ENGLISH

BLOCK 1: HISTORY OF ENGLISH LANGUAGE AND PHONETICS

KRISHNA KANTA HANDIQUI STATE OPEN UNIVERSITY

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SEMESTER 2

MA IN ENGLISH
COURSE 2: LANGUAGE, LINGUISTICS AND GRAMMAR
BLOCK 1: HISTORY OF ENGLISH LANGUAGE AND PHONETICS

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COURSE INTRODUCTION:

This is the second course of Semester 2 of MA English Programme. This course introduces the learners to the basic concepts of English Language and Linguistics. 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, 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 1: INTRODUCTION

Units 1 & 2 shall introduce you 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, also took place in the formation of the English language has also been provided.

Unit 2 In this unit, we shall introduce you to 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 shall look at 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.

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 READING” 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?

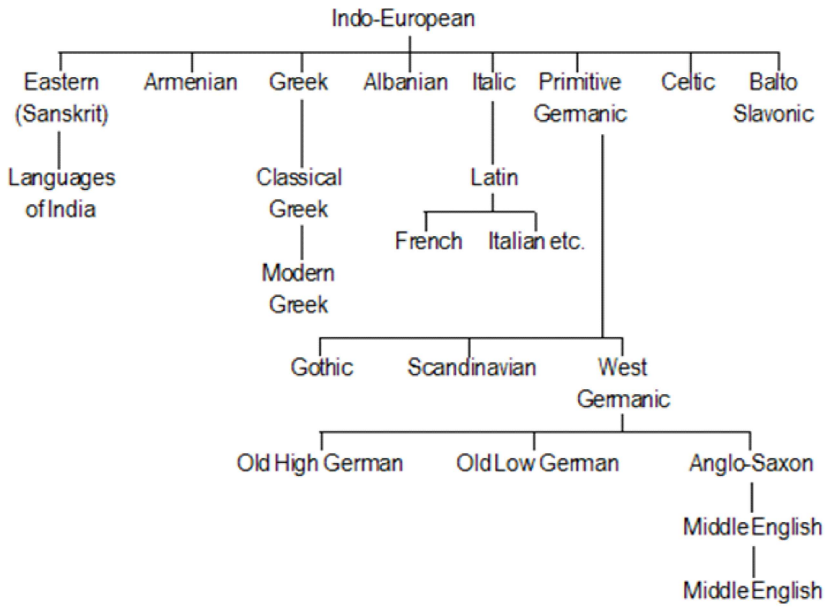
What is a language family? A language family refers to a set of languages deriving from a common ancestor or parent. A language family can be represented with the help of a family tree. Languages derived from a common parent show some common features, some shared properties. It is assumed that such systematic 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.

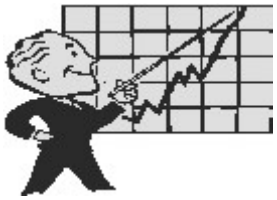
The process of standardization of the English language has been a continuous endeavour in Modern English and it is in this context that Dr. Johnson's *Dictionary* attains a position of immense significance. It is through his dictionary that the language received its first authoritative treatment. The 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.

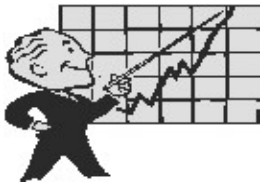
- qu for cw queen for cwen.
- gh in words like right, enough instead of h.
- ch in words like church instead of c.
- ou in place of u in words like house.

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

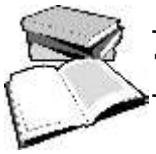
The term refers to a prestige variety of a language used by a speech community and cuts across regional varieties of the language called regional dialects. A standard language is an institutionalized norm which can be used by the mass media. It is the variety used for teaching the language in a formal 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

Alexander, Michael. (2009). *A History of English Literature*. London: Palgrave Foundations.

Baugh, A. C. & Cable, T. (1993). *A History of the English Language.* (4th Ed.). Rutledge.

Crystal, David. (1993). *The Cambridge Encyclopedia of the English Language*. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press.

Jesperson, Otto. (1982). *Growth and Structure of the English language.* New Delhi: Oxford University Press.

Lyons, John. (1981). *Language and Linguistics*. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press

Wood, F. T. (1969). *An Outline History of the English Language*. Macmillan.

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

* * *

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

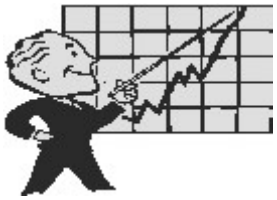
expect to receive a ring to be worn in the finger. We know that ring in this case means a telephone call. Similarly, to drop someone a line doesn't mean dropping a fishing line but a brief message. There are scores of examples recorded in a good dictionary how words through a process of extension or 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.

3.6.3 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.

3.6.4 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

Alexander, Michael. (2009). *A History of English Literature*. London: Palgrave Foundations.

Baugh, A. C. & Cable, T. (1993). *A History of the English Language.* (4th Edn.). Rutledge.

Crystal, David. (1993). *The Cambridge Encyclopedia of the English Language*. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press.

Jesperson, Otto. (1982). *Growth and Structure of the English language.* New Delhi: Oxford University Press.

Lyons, John. (1981). *Language and Linguistics*. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press

Wood, F. T. (1969). *An Outline History of the English Language*. Macmillan.

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.

* * *

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.

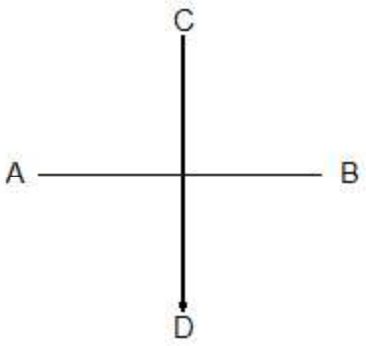
3.4.1 Synchrony and Diachrony

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

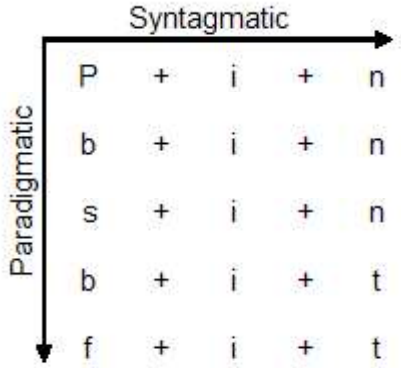
In the works of de Saussure, the terms syntagmatic and paradigmatic associations or relations can be explained by referring to a sentence on utterance. When we speak, our speech can be considered as a string of constituents in a linear order. The sentence The boy kicked the ball is made up of the following 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 L_2 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 L_2 learners.

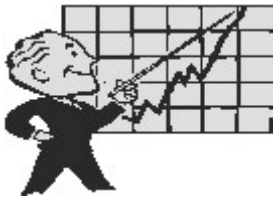
Likewise, the concept of the style of discourse has given us the knowledge of the use of distinct varieties of English in formal, semi-formal and informal situations. We now know that the style of English in a formal piece of communication as in a formal letter is different from the style used in writing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

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

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

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

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

——— (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.

* * *

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 /ɪ/ 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/.

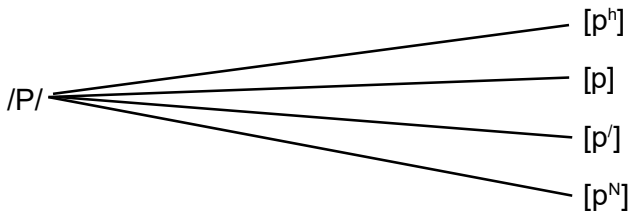
a) When /p/ occurs in the initial position of a word as in pen, it is realized as an aspirated voiceless bi-labial plosive. We use the symbol [p^h] to describe the allophonic variant of /p/ in word initial, stressed position.

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 ˋ] 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 [$t^hop^Nməust$].

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.

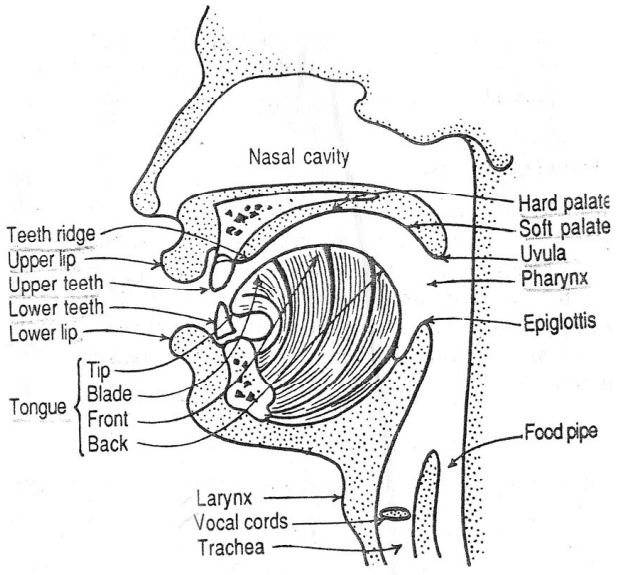


Fig. 1 Organs of speech

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)

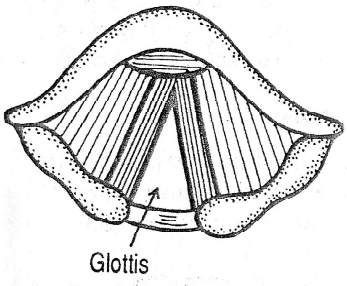


Fig. 2 Vocal cords drawn wide apart

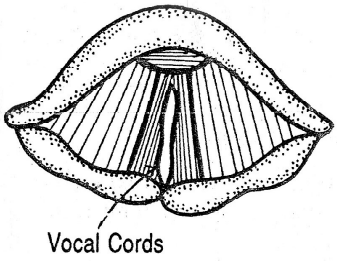


Fig. 3 Vocal cords held loosely together



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.

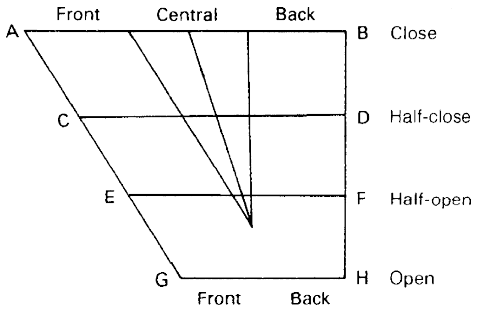


Fig. 15 The vowel diagram

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) /ˈɑ/ as in heart: While articulating /ɣ:/, 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 /ɀ/, 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) /ɔ:/ as in court: While articulating /ɒ:/, 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. /ɒ:/ 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 / /, the back of the tongue is raised to a position between close and half-close with the lips loosely spread. / / 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) /ˈəɪ / as in high (close to আই) : While articulating / /, the glide begins at a point slightly behind the front open position and moves in the direction slightly associated with / I /. The vowel occurs.

- ❍ Initially : ice, island
- ❍ Medially : bite, fight
- ❍ Finally : try, cry

3) /ɔɪ/ as in toy (close to অয়): While articulating /ˈ I /, the glide begins at a point between the back open position and moves in the direction of the position associated with / I /. The vowel occurs

- ❍ Initially : oil, ointment
- ❍ Medially : boil, coil
- ❍ Finally : boy, employ

4) /əʊ/ as in old (close to ও) : 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) /ɛ ə/ 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

/¥/ : 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

adˈmit beˈtween

adˈvance oˈccur

(2) Stress pattern of tri-syllabic words :

(a) Stress on the first syllable :

ˈadvertise

ˈcharacter

ˈinnocent

(b) Stress on the second syllable :

aˈgreement

deˈvelop

comˈpanion

(c) Stress on the third syllable

cigaˈrette

employˈee

magaˈzine

(3) Stress pattern of words of four syllables :

(a) Stress on the first syllable

ˈabsolutely

ˈcomfortable

ˈconfiscated

(b) Stress on the second syllable

aˈbility

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) |photograph (primary stress on 1st syllable)

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

(c) photo|graphic (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 :

|dining – room

|schoolmaster

|thunderstorm

(b) Stress on the second element

when|ever

how|ever

him|self

(c) Stress on both the elements

|aftern|oon

|absent|minded

|old |fashional

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	conˈ duct
ˈcontrast	conˈ trast
ˈimport	imˈ port
ˈobject	obˈ ject
ˈperfect	perˈ 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 (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 (\ ) 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) |After/ all | you had a| long| holiday\ 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 : |Can you/ possibly come to \morrow?

Asha : Well, I sup pose I might.

(b) Rina : |What 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

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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 /ʋ/

(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.

* * *

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	/ ɔ - kaunt/
command	/kɔ - ma:nd/
affect	/ ɔ - 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 [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 / ‘tebl /; above /ˌb/

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

ˌable ˌafter

ˌbutter ˌcolour

b) Stress on second syllable

adˌmit beˌtween

adˌvance oˌccur

2. Stress pattern of tri-syllabic words :

a) Stress on the first syllable :

ˌadvertise

ˌcharacter

ˌinnocent

b) Stress on the second syllable :

aˌgreement

deˌvelop

comˌpanion

c) Stress on the third syllable

cigaˌrette

employ|lee

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:

ˈdining – room

ˈschoolmaster

ˈthunderstorm

b) Stress on the second element

whenˈever

howˈever

himˈself

c) Stress on both the elements

ˈafterˈnoon

ˈabsentˈminded

ˈold ˈfashioned

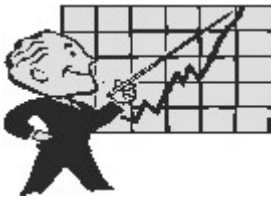
5.4.3 Grammatical Function of Stress

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**
ˈconduct	conˈ duct
ˈcontrast	conˈ trast
ˈimport	imˈ port
ˈobject	obˈ ject
ˈperfect	perˈ 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	/dɔz/	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	/kɔ d/	How could you say that?
13.	shall	/ ʃl/	We shall need to run.
14.	should	/ʃɔ d/	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 ˈcame to ˈsee 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 ˈnother one.

(f) I promised to ˈcome.

(g) Weˈ went to the ˈmarket

(h) ˈTurn of the ˈlight.

(i) ˈwant to ˈbuy a ˈshirt.

(j) ˈWhen are you re ˈturning?

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

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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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