

**DICTIONARY OF LINGUISTICS'
TERMINOLOGIES**

Q. What is Communication?

Ans. Communication is a behavior which affects the behavior of others by the transmission of information.

Q. What is a code?

Ans. A Code is a complex pattern of associations of the units of a communication system. In language those units could be sound unit; meaningful units, such as words; or meaningful units that are larger than words such as phrases, clauses and sentences.

Q. What is Encode?

Ans. To encode is to put message into code.

Q. What is Decoding?

Ans. To decode a message is to react to it in a way that reflects the reason that the sender encoded it.

Q. What is grammar?

Ans. Grammar is the system (pattern) of elements (such as words) and of the rules of phonology, morphology, syntax and semantics inherent in a language. The term grammar also refers to the study of these elements and rules.

Q. What is phonological system??

Ans. The phonological system of a language is the grammar of sounds of that language.

Q. What is Lexicon?

Ans. A Lexicon is a mental dictionary, the vocabulary that one has stored in the brain.

Q. What are phonological rules?

Ans. Morphological rules are the rules to construct words from their component parts.

Q. What is Syntax?

Ans. Syntax is a set of rules a person uses to form units of language larger than words. The term syntax also refers to the study of those rules.

Q. What is Linguistics?

Ans. It is a scientific study of human language. Sub-fields of structure-focused linguistics include:

Phonetics: The study of the physical properties of speech (or signed) production and perception

Phonology: The study of sounds (or signs) as discrete, abstract elements in the speaker's mind that distinguish meaning

Morphology: The study of internal structures of words and how they can be modified.

Syntax: The study of how words combine to form grammatical sentences.

Semantics: The study of the meaning of words (lexical semantics) and fixed word combinations (phraseology), and how these combine to form the meanings of sentences

Pragmatics: The study of how utterances are used in communicative acts, and the role played by context and nonlinguistic knowledge in the transmission of meaning

Discourse analysis: The analysis of language use in texts (spoken, written, or signed)

Q. What is semantics?

Ans. Semantics is the study of meaning of words.

Q. What are Cognates?

Ans. Cognates are vocabulary words from two or more languages, which sound similar and refer to the same thing. Cognates serve as a clue that two or more languages are related to one another since they share strong similarities in the form and meaning of certain vocabulary.

Q. What is Linguistic competence?

Ans. Linguistic competence is the subconscious knowledge of language of that allows a speaker to create a potentially infinite number of messages.

Q. What is productivity in linguistics?

Ans. Productivity is the ability to produce messages that one has never produced before and to understand messages that one has never heard or seen before.

Q. What is Linguistic performance?

Ans. Linguistic performance is the application of linguistic competence to actually producing an utterance.

Q. What is Anthropological Linguistics?

Ans. Anthropological linguistics is the study of the relations between language and culture and the relations between human biology, cognition and language. This strongly overlaps the field of linguistic anthropology, which is the branch of anthropology that studies humans through the languages that they use

Q. What is a delivery system in language?

Ans. A delivery system is the way in which knowledge of language (linguistic competence) is used to send a message. The three basic ways of delivering a message linguistically are speech, writing and sign language.

Q. What is Verbal?

Ans. Verbal means language, speech, writing or sign language.

- Q. What is semantic narrowing?**
Ans. In semantic narrowing, the meaning of word becomes particular i.e. from general to particular. It is a reverse process of extension.
- Q. What is nonverbal?**
Ans. Nonverbal means not language. It is a communication that is not conveyed through speech, writing or written sign in language.
- Q. What is Synchrony?**
Ans. Synchrony is the connection and relationship between two or more things that occur at the same time.
- Q. What is extension or broadening of meaning?**
Ans. In extension or broadening of words the meaning of word becomes more general i.e. from particular to general the main mechanism in it are metaphor and metonymy. Metaphor involves the transfer of meaning because of some imagined similarity whereas metonymy uses the name of an attribute to denote the whole entity such as **white house** for the American president.
- Q. What is redundancy?**
Ans. Redundancy occurs when the same message (or elements of a message) are encoded in different ways and are simultaneously sent to the receiver of the message.
- Q. What is Pheromone?**
Ans. A pheromone is a chemical that is secreted by one individual and acts from a distance on another individual to alter that individual's behavior.
- Q. What is a sound spectrograph?**
Ans. The sound Spectrograph is an instrument used to analyze sound by producing a visual record of sound in terms of time duration of the sound, its frequency (number of occurrences within specific unit of time) and amplitude (degree of loudness).
- Q. What are calls in language?**
Ans. Calls are usually relatively short vocal signals that might communicate a variety of messages. They are understood by a variety of other species.
- Q. What is openness in language?**
Ans. Openness is the ability to add new words, phrases or other meaningful units of a language.
- Q. What is a discrete signal?**
Ans. A discrete signal is one that doesn't blend with other signals.
- Q. What is arbitrary?**
Ans. Arbitrary, is the relationship of language, means that features of language such as words, have no direct relationship to their meaning.

Q. What is a stimulus bound behavior?

Ans. A stimulus bound behavior is the behavior that occurs only as a result of a specific environmental trigger (occurrence).

Q. What is displacement?

Ans. Displacement is the ability to communicate about things at times other than present and to communicate about things not directly in front of the sender and or receiver.

Q. What is Prevarication?

Ans. Linguistically, it refers to the ability to communicate about things that are not verifiable. These are those things for which there is no empirical proof.

Q. What does the term "Hominin" refer to?

Ans. The term "hominin" refers to modern humans and the ancestors of modern humans that go back in time more than six million years.

Q. What is a Clever Hans Effect?

Ans. The Clever Hans Effect is the name given to the fact that a nonhuman or human's behavior might be influenced or directed by subtle and most of the time unintentional cues of others. In terms of experimentation, these cues might reflect a researcher's expectation of what the results of the experiment should be.

Q. What is Broca's area of brain?

Ans. It is the area of brain that controls the larynx, lips, tongue, and other areas of the digestive and respiratory systems. These are involved in Oral and facial fine motor skills in the production of language.

Q. What is Wernicke's area of brain?

Ans. It is one of the areas of the brain that is involved with the comprehension of speech and the selection of lexical items.

Q. What is Broca's aphasia?

Ans. It is a condition due to damage to Broca's area of the brain. Problems in the production of speech and loss of some grammatical understanding of language occur due to it.

Q. What is Wernicke's aphasia?

Ans. It is caused by the damage to Wernicke's area of the brain. It is characterized by the speech that includes lexical errors and nonsense words.

Phonetics And Phonology

Q. What is phonetics?

Ans. It is the study of speech sounds, their physical properties, the way they are received and decoded by the brain, and the way they are produced.

Q. What is Acoustic Phonetics?**Ans.** It is the study of the physical properties of sound.**Q.** What is auditory phonetics?**Ans.** It is the study of how sounds are received by the ear and decoded by the brain. It is the study of the production of speech sounds.**Q.** What are ingressive sounds?**Ans.** These are speech sounds that are produced by sucking air into the mouth.**Q.** What are Egressive sounds?**Ans.** These sounds are produced by expelling air from the lungs.**Q.** What are articulators?**Ans.** These are the organs of speech i.e. windpipe, hard palate, soft palate, lips, teeth etc.**Q.** What is Trachea?**Ans.** The trachea (windpipe) is a tube that extends from the voice box to the lungs.**Q.** What is Larynx?**Ans.** The larynx (voice box or Adam's apple) is the uppermost part of the trachea that contains the vocal cords or folds and is one of the main sound producing organs.**Q.** What are vocal cords?**Ans.** Vocal cords are a muscular pair of elastic folds. They can be moved into various degrees of openness.**Q.** What is glottis?**Ans.** The glottis is the space (opening) between the vocal cords.**Q.** What is the epiglottis?**Ans.** The epiglottis is a membranous flap that covers the glottis during swallowing and prevents anything that is swallowed from entering the lungs.**Q.** What is the pharyngeal cavity?**Ans.** The pharyngeal cavity is the space or passageway in the throat.**Q.** What is the nasal cavity?**Ans.** The nasal cavity is the passageway in the nose.**Q.** What is Oral Cavity?**Ans.** The oral cavity is the space or passageway in the mouth.**Q.** What is the Uvula?**Ans.** The Uvula is the fleshy lobe at the back of the roof of the mouth.**Q.** What is the alveolar ridge?**Ans.** The alveolar ridge is the hard ridge behind the upper front teeth.**Q.** What is the Soft Palate?**Ans.** The Soft Palate (Velum) is the back fleshy section of the roof of the mouth that is movable and closes off the nasal cavity during swallowing.

Q. What are voiced sounds?

Ans. Voiced sounds are produced by the vibrations of the vocal cords.

Q. What are voiceless sounds?

Ans. Voiceless sounds are produced when the vocal cords are apart and the airstream flows from the larynx with minimal or no vibrations.

Q. What is Orthography?

Ans. Orthography refers to spelling and to the writing system of a language.

Q. What is a consonant?

Ans. A consonant is a speech sound that is produced when the airstream is constricted or stopped (and then released) at some place along its path before it escapes from the mouth.

Q. What is a vowel?

Ans. A vowel is a speech sound without constriction or stoppage.

Q. What is articulation?

Ans. Articulation is the production of speech sounds by the movement of the speech organs.

Q. What is aspiration?

Ans. Aspiration is the amount of air that is produced upon the release of a stop.

Q. What are diacritics or diacritic marks?

Ans. Diacritic marks are notations added to the main phonetic symbol to clarify details of pronunciation.

Q. What are Tense Vowels?

Ans. Tense vowels are produced with more tension and more constriction of the vocal tract than lax vowels. They are usually of longer duration.

Q. What are Lax vowels?

Ans. Lax vowels show less tension and constriction. They are usually shorter in duration than tense vowels.

Q. What is a reduced vowel?

Ans. A reduced vowel is an unstressed central vowel that is a shorter version of a similar sounding but longer vowel. In the word rumba [rəm bə] the [e] can be seen as a reduced variant of the full vowel [A].

Q. What is a monophthong?

Ans. A monophthong is a single vowel sound.

Q. What is diphthong?

Ans. A diphthong is a double vowel sound which begins with one vowel sound and gradually moves into another vowel sound or glide.

Q. What are Homophones?

Ans. Homophones are the words which have same sound but differ in meaning and / or spelling.

Q. **What are syllabic consonants?**

Ans. Syllabic consonants are nasal or liquid consonants that can take the place of vowels as the nucleus of a syllable in certain words.

Q. **What is a Phonetic Segment or Phone?**

Ans. A phonetic segment or phone is a speech sound that is perceived as an individual and unique sound, different from other such sounds.

Q. **What are supra-segmentals or prosodic features?**

Ans. Suprasegmentals or prosodic features are characteristic of speech that can distinguish words, phrases, or sentences that are otherwise identical in their phonetic segments. Suprasegmentals are associated with stretches of speech larger than an individual phonetic segment.

Q. **What is fundamental frequency?**

Ans. Fundamental frequency is the rate at which the vocal folds (cords) vibrate in speech.

Q. **What is pitch in speech?**

Ans. Pitch is the perception of fundamental frequency evaluated on a scale from high to low.

Q. **What is Intonation Contour?**

Ans. An intonation contour is the overall pitch of an utterance, sometimes represented by a line drawn over the utterance that traces the change in pitch.

Q. **What is an intonational language?**

Ans. In an intonation language or intonational language, different intonation contours change the syntactic function of sentences that are otherwise the same.

Q. **What is a tone language?**

Ans. In a tone language (tonal language), pitch difference in the same string of phones will change the meaning of that string.

Q. **What is a tone in language?**

Ans. Tone is a specific change in pitch that functions in tonal languages to distinguish words that are made up of the same segment.

Q. **What is a Geminate?**

Ans. A geminate is a phone with duration about twice that of the same phone pronounced with a short duration; it may be a long consonant or vowel.

Q. **What is a singleton?**

Ans. A singleton is an individual phone with a duration about half as long as a geminate.

Q. **What is a word stress?**

Ans. The word stress means to make emphatic or more prominent a part or the whole of the word.

Q. What is a juncture in connected speech?

Ans. Juncture is a real or perceived pause within a series of phones.

Q. What is Phonology?

Ans. It is the study of the sound system of a language that tells about what sounds are in a language and what are the rules for combining those sounds into larger units. Phonology can also refer to the study of the sound systems of all languages, including universal rules of sound.

Q. What is a phonetic unit or segment?

Ans. A phone or phonetic unit or segment is an actual speech sound produced by the vocal tract that is perceived as an individual and unique sound, it is different from other such sounds.

Q. What is a phoneme?

Ans. A phoneme is a perceived unit of language that signals a difference in meaning when contrasted to another phoneme.

Q. What is an allophone?

Ans. An allophone is a variation of a phoneme. Different allophones of a phoneme occur in different and predictable phonetic environments.

Q. What are Segmental and Supra Segmental Features?

Ans. Segmental features of Pronunciation:

The individual sounds (phonemes) of a language vowels and consonants are called segmental features.

Supra Segmental Features of Pronunciation:

Aspects of pronunciation that affect more than just one sound segment, such as stress, rhythm and intonation (the musical aspect of pronunciation) are called Supra segmental features.

Q. What does the term distinctive mean in linguistics?

Ans. In linguistics, the term distinctive refers to units that contrast. They change meaning when substituted for each other. Phonemes are distinctive but allophones are not.

Q. What is an utterance in speech?

Ans. An utterance is a stretch of speech between two periods of silence or potential (perceived) silence.

Q. What is a corpus?

Ans. A corpus (plural corpora or corpuses) is a collection of linguistic information used to discover linguistics rules and principles.

Q. What is a minimal pair?

Ans. A minimal pair is made up of two forms (words, phrases, sentences) that differ in meaning. They contain the same number of sound segments, and display only one phonetic difference which occurs at the same place in the form.

Q. **What is a minimal set?**

Ans. A minimal set is made up of more than two forms (words, phrases, sentences) that differ in meaning. They contain the same number of sound segments and display only one phonetic difference, which occurs at the same place in the form.

Q. **What is complementary distribution?**

Ans. Complementary distribution means that each of a series of sounds occurs in different phonetic contexts. These sounds never contrast with each other. Phones that are in complementary distribution with each other are allophones of the same phoneme.

Q. **What is overlapping distribution?**

Ans. Overlapping distribution is characteristic of different phones that appear in most of the same phonetic environments. Unlike complementary distribution, phones in overlapping distribution are different phonemes (not allophones) and therefore substituting one for the other changes the meaning of an utterance.

Q. **What is a narrow or phonetic transcription?**

Ans. A narrow transcription or phonetic transcription represents the actual sounds that a person utters in as much detail as possible.

Q. **What is a broad transcription or phonemic transcription?**

Ans. A broad or phonemic transcription represents the idealized sounds, called phonemes, which are actually classes of sounds (the class being made up of allophones) rather than physically real speech sounds.

Q. **What is a distinctive feature in phonemes?**

Ans. A distinctive feature is any trait or quality that distinguishes one phoneme from another.

Q. **What is a binary system in sound?**

Ans. A binary system is a classification system in which a feature is either present or absent.

Q. **What is a feature matrix?**

Ans. A feature matrix lists sound segments (or other phenomena) along the horizontal axis, and features on the vertical axis.

Q. **What is natural class in phonemes?**

Ans. A natural class is subset of the total set of phonemes that shares a small number of phonetic (distinctive) features, which can be shown to play a significant role in phonological regularities (rules).

Q. **What is an obligatory phonological process?**

Ans. An obligatory phonological process is a rule that most native speakers of a specific language apply to make a string of phonetic units easier to pronounce and perceive.

Q. What is An Optional Phonological Process?

Ans. An optional phonological process is a pattern that is applied by individuals or groups of individuals and is not necessarily characteristic of most native speakers of a language. It is stylistic.

Q. What is Assimilation?

Ans. Assimilation is the obligatory phonological process that makes it easier to pronounce combinations of sounds by making those sounds share a distinctive feature that in other environments one of the sounds would not have.

Q. What is Manner Assimilation?

Ans. It involves making a string of sounds easier to pronounce by making one of them conform to the manner of articulation of the other.

Q. What is Voice Assimilation?

Ans. It occurs when a sound comes to agree with a surrounding sound in its voicing.

Q. What is devoiced sound?

Ans. A sound is said to be devoiced if it loses its voiced feature because of a voiceless sound and sounds in its phonetic environments.

Q. What is Place Assimilation?

Ans. In place assimilation, adjacent sounds are made to agree in their place of articulation.

Q. What is change in syllabicity?

Ans. A change in syllabicity involves an alternative pronunciation of a syllable form an idealized pronunciation:

Q. What is redundancy?

Ans. Redundancy occurs when more information than necessary under ideal conditions is present. For instance, when a vowel is nasalized in English, it indicates that it follows a nasal consonant. If a person doesn't hear the nasal consonant clearly, he or she might be able to predict its presence from hearing the nasalization of the vowel.

Q. What is markedness?

Ans. It shows that certain items are difficult to understand. For example, idiomatic expressions, phrasal verbs, maxims etc

Q. What are unmarked sounds?

Ans. It shows those items of language that can be easily learnt. Unmarked sounds are more basic, more common in the language and learned by children earlier than marked sounds.

Q. What are marked sounds?

Ans. Marked sounds are more complex, less common in the language and learned by children later than unmarked sounds.

Q. What are morphemes?

Ans. Morphemes are the smallest recurrent units of meaning. This means that morpheme can't be broken down further and remain meaningful.

Q. What is morphology?

Ans. Morphology is the study of the structure and classification of words and the units that make up words.

Q. What is a bound morpheme?

Ans. A bound morpheme is a meaningful grammatical unit that can't occur alone.

Q. What is a free morpheme?

Ans. A free morpheme is a meaningful grammatical unit that can stand alone or in most cases have other morphemes attached to it.

Q. What is a root?

Ans. A root is a morpheme usually but not always a free morpheme that serves as a building block for other words and carries the main meaning of those words.

Q. What is an affix?

Ans. An affix is a bound morpheme that can be added to a root.

Q. What is a prefix?

Ans. A prefix is an affix added to the beginning of a root.

Q. What is a compound?

Ans. A compound is a word made up of two or more roots.

Q. What is a closed form compound?

Ans. A closed form compound is a compound word with no space or hyphen between the different roots.

Q. What is a hyphenated compound?

Ans. A hyphenated compound has a hyphen or hyphens between the different roots of the compound.

Q. What is an open form compound?

Ans. An open form compound has spaces between its roots.

Q. What is the head of a compound?

Ans. The head of a compound is similar to its topic that is the main most general or core meaning of the compound. The head also determines the grammatical function of the compound.

Q. What is derivational morphemes?

Ans. Derivational morphemes are bound morphemes that change the meaning or part of speech of a word.

Q. What is inflectional morphemes?

Ans. Inflectional morphemes are bound morphemes that don't change the essential meaning or part of speech of a word. They change grammatical functions (other than parts of speech) such as number, person, tense, case, aspect (duration of an action), modality (commitment to what is said or attitude about what is said) or voice (active or passive).

Q. What is an allomorph?

Ans. An allomorph is a variation of a morpheme.

Q. **What are morphophonemic rules?**

Ans. Morphophonemic rules are rules that specify which allomorph of a morpheme will be used in a specific phonetic environment.

Q. **What is typology?**

Ans. Typology is a branch of linguistics that studies the structural similarities of languages.

Q. **What is morphological typology?**

Ans. Morphological typology is the study and classification of language based on how morphemes create words.

Q. **What is a poly synthetic language?**

Ans. It is a type of language in which each word is equivalent to the whole sentence in other languages.

Q. **What are open classes of words?**

Ans. These are the type of words (such as nouns, adjectives, verbs and adverbs) that grow in number in a language. It means their number keeps on increasing with the passage of time.

Q. **What are closed word classes?**

Ans. These are types of words (such as preposition and pronouns) are the words which have very limited growth.

Q. **What is Neologisms?**

Ans. Neologisms are newly coined words in any language.

Q. **What is compounding?**

Ans. Compounding is creating a word with more than one root.

Acronyms are words that are formed from the first letter or letters of more than one words.

Clipping is deleting a section of a word to create a shortened form.

Blending is the process of taking two or more words (compounding), clipping parts off one or more of the words, and then combining them.

A blend is a word that is the result of the process of blending.

Derivation is the process of coining a new word by adding a derivational affix to a word.

Analogy is a process by which one form of a word (or other linguistic phenomena) is used as the model for constructing another word or structure.

Back formation is used to coin a new word through the process of analogy by removing an affix or what appears to be an affix from that word.

Etymology is the study of the history of words.

Syntax is a level of grammar that specifically refers to the arrangement of words and morpheme in the construction of sentences.

Descriptive syntax or grammar refers to the mostly subconscious rules of a language that one uses to combine smaller units into sentences. The term also refers to the study of these rules.

Prescriptive syntax or grammar (as the term implies) refers to the concept that there is a correct and an incorrect way to speak, write or sign.

A sentence is a string of words that is grammatically complete with at least two components, a subject and a predicate.

Constituents are the units being combined to create larger syntactic constructions.

The **subject** of a sentence is the topic of the sentence.

The **predicate** of a sentence is a comment or assertion made about the topic.

A simple sentence is a sentence with one subject and one predicate.

A compound sentence is made up of at least two simple sentences joined by coordinating conjunction. In writing, punctuation can substitute for the conjunction.

An **independent clause** is a simple sentence.

A dependent sentence has a subject and predicate but can't stand alone as a simple sentence. It depends on an independent clause to make it complete.

A complex sentence contains a simple sentence and one or more dependent clauses.

A compound complex sentence has two or more independent clauses and at least one dependent clause.

Metonymy is "a figure of speech in which an attribute or commonly associated feature is used to name or designate something." A short definition is "part for whole."

Synecdoche is "a figure of speech by which a more inclusive term is used for a less inclusive one, or vice versa."

In **extension or broadening of meaning** of words the meaning of word becomes more general i.e. from particular to general. The main mechanism in it is metaphor and metonymy. Metaphor involves the transfer of meaning because of imagined simile. Metonymy used the name of an attribute to denote the whole entity. For example white house for the American president.

In **Semantic Borrowing** meaning of word becomes particular. i.e. from general to particular. It is a reverse process of extension.

Grammaticalization:

It is a process by which an independent lexical word gradually acquires a grammatical function. For example, development from main to auxiliary verb *Will-----Want*. Development of progressive form. For example, he is hunting. He is a hunting, he is on hunting.

It is a semantic bleaching, a particular type of semantic change is connected with grammaticalization as when English *will* develop from its full verb meaning "to want" into the modern auxiliary *will*, which now only has grammatical meaning.

Speaker's evaluation:

Pejorative of meaning or negative evaluation is there in knave, in old English it was used for "boy" then for "peasant" and now as a villain.

Extensive shift of meaning clouds the relationship of original meaning with the modern meaning. For example the meaning of *Silly*.

Isolating: A language in which words generally consist of single and clearly distinguishable morpheme is called Isolating. For example, Chinese Language.

Agglutinating: A language in which words consist of morphemes which are formally neatly separable and each has a single meaning such as Turkish and Japanese.

Inflecting: language in which grammatical relationship like number, tense etc. are predominantly expressed by grammatical affixes is called inflecting. For example, Latin and Greek.

Palatalization of Vowel:

It is a sound in which the position of the tongue is fronted towards the hard palate. For example, mouse----- mice, foot-----feet.

Lenition is a cover term for the process which involves some "weakening" of sounds such as voicing. For example the change of voiceless consonants in voiced ones. Vocalization of consonants or deletion or disappearance of sounds as in French "mur" mature and in Latin "matures".

Assimilation is a process by which two neighboring sounds become more similar (partial) or identical (complete). For example, impossible, ten bikes, illiterate.

Dissimilation is a process by which a sound becomes less similar to another neighboring one as in *pilgrim* whereas in Latin it is *peregrinus*.

Language is a system of conventional signals used for communication by the whole community.

Speech is a manifestation of language and spoken language and normally it is a continuum of sound.

Speech act is a manifestation of language by which one or more speakers exchange information.

Philology:

It is the study of linguistics and criticism.

Semantics studies the referential meaning of words like "table" refers to definite piece of furniture.

The similarity or likeness of organization of linguistic unit is called **isomorphism**. A small number of elements at one level can enter into thousands of different combinations to form unit at the other level.

Langue:

It describes the social, impersonal phenomenon of language as a system of signs.

Parole:

It describes the individual, personal phenomenon of language as a series of speech acts made by a linguistic subject.

The signifier:

It describes the shape of the word, its phonic component and the sequence of letters or the phonemes.

The Signified:

It is the ideational component, the concept or the object that appears in our minds when we hear or read the signifier.

General Features Of Language

Applied linguistics:

Applied Linguistics is the application of insights from theoretical linguistics to practical matters such as language teaching, remedial linguistic therapy, language planning or whatever.

Arbitrariness:

An essential notion in structural linguistics which denies any necessary relationship between linguistic signs and their referents, e.g. objects in the outside world.

Areas of linguistics:

Any of a number of areas of study in which linguistic insights have been brought to bear, for instance sociolinguistics in which scholars study society and the way language is used in it. Other examples are psycholinguistics which is concerned with the psychological and linguistic development of the child.

Competence:

According to Chomsky in his *Aspects of the theory of syntax* (1965) this is the abstract ability of an individual to speak the language

which he/she has learned as native language in his/her childhood. The competence of a speaker is unaffected by such factors as nervousness, temporary loss of memory, speech errors, etc. These latter phenomena are entirely within the domain of *performance* which refers to the process of applying one's competence in the act of speaking. Bear in mind that competence also refers to the ability to judge if a sentence is grammatically well-formed; it is an unconscious ability.

Context:

A term referring to the environment in which an element (sound, word, phrase) occurs. The context may determine what elements may be present, in which case one says that there are 'co-occurrence restrictions' for instance 1) /r/ may not occur after /s/ in a syllable in English, e.g. */sri:n/ is not phonotactically permissible in English; 2) the progressive form cannot occur with stative verbs, e.g. *We are knowing German* is not well-formed in English.

Contrast:

A difference between two linguistic items which can be exploited systematically. The distinction between the two forms arises from the fact that these can occupy one and the same slot in a syntagm, i.e. they alternate paradigmatically, e.g. the different inflectional forms of verbs contrast in both English and German. Forms which contrast are called *distinctive*. This can apply to sounds as well, for instance /p/ and /b/ contrast in English as minimal pairs such as *pin/pin/* : *bin/bin/* show.

Convention:

An agreement, usually reached unconsciously by speakers in a community, that relationships are to apply between linguistic items, between these and the outside world or to apply in the use of rules in the grammar of their language.

Creativity:

An accepted feature of human language — deriving from the phenomenon of sentence generation — which accounts for speakers' ability to produce and to understand a theoretically infinite number of sentences.

Descriptive:

An approach to linguistics which is concerned with saying what language is like and not what it should be like (prescriptivism).

Diachronic:

Refers to language viewed over time and contrasts with *synchronic* which refers to a point in time. This is one of the major structural distinctions introduced by Saussure and which is used to characterise types of linguistic investigation.

Displacement:

One of the key characteristics of human language which enables it to refer to situations which are not here and now, e.g. *I studied linguistics in London when I was in my twenties.*

Duality of patterning:

A structural principle of human language whereby larger units consist of smaller building blocks, the number of such blocks being limited but the combinations being almost infinite. For instance all words consist of combinations of a limited number of sounds, say about 40 in either English or German. Equally all sentences consist of structures from a small set with different words occupying different points in the structures allowing for virtually unlimited variety.

Economy:

A principle of linguistic analysis which demands that rules and units are to be kept to a minimum, i.e. every postulated rule or unit must be justified linguistically by capturing a generalisation about the language being analysed, if not about all languages.

Extra-linguistic:

Any phenomenon which lies outside of language. An extra-linguistic reason for a linguistic feature would be one which is not to be found in the language itself.

Figurative:

Any use of a word in a non-literal sense, e.g. *at the foot of the mountain* where *foot* is employed figuratively to indicate the bottom of the mountain. Figurative usage is the source of the second meaning of polysemous words.

Formalist:

An adjective referring to linguistic analyses which lay emphasis on relatively abstract conceptions of language structure.

General linguistics:

A broad term for investigations which are concerned with the nature of language, procedures of linguistic analysis, etc. without considering to what use these can be put. It contrasts explicitly with *applied linguistics*.

Generative:

A reference to a type of linguistic analysis which relies heavily on the formulation of rules for the exhaustive description (generation) of the sentences of a language.

Head:

The centre of a phrase or sentence which is possibly qualified by further optional elements, in the phrase *these bright new signs* the head is *signs* as all other elements refer to it and are optional. The term is also used in lexicology to refer to the determining section of a

compound; in *family tree*, the element *tree* is head and *family* is modifier. This has consequences for grammar, especially in synthetic languages, such as German where in a compound like *Stammbuch* the gender is neuter (with *das*) because the head *Buch* is although the modifying word is masculine (*der Stamm*).

Hierarchy:

Any order of elements from the most central or basic to the most peripheral, e.g. a hierarchy of word classes in English would include nouns and verbs at the top and elements like adjectives and adverbs further down with conjunctions and subordinators still further down. The notions of top and bottom are intended in a metaphorical sense.

Idealization:

A situation where the linguist chooses to ignore details of language use for reasons of greater generalisation.

Language:

A system which consists of a set of symbols (sentences) — realised phonetically by sounds — which are used in a regular order to convey a certain meaning. Apart from these formal characteristics, definitions of language tend to highlight other aspects such as the fact that language is used regularly by humans and that it has a powerful social function.

Lay speaker:

A general term to refer to an individual who does not possess linguistic training and who can be taken to be largely unaware of the structure of language.

Level:

A reference to a set of recognisable divisions in the structure of natural language. These divisions are largely independent of each other and are characterised by rules and regularities of organisation. Traditionally five levels are recognised: phonetics, phonology, morphology, syntax, semantics. Pragmatics may also be considered as a separate level from semantics. Furthermore levels may have subdivisions as is the case with morphology which falls into inflectional and derivational morphology (the former is concerned with grammatical endings and the latter with processes of word-formation). The term 'level' may also be taken to refer to divisions within syntax in generative grammar.

Linguistics:

The study of language. As a scientific discipline built on objective principles, linguistics did not develop until the beginning of the 19th century. The approach then was historical as linguists were mainly concerned with the reconstruction of the Indo-European

language. With the advent of structuralism at the beginning of the 20th century, it became oriented towards viewing language at one point in time. The middle of this century saw a radically new approach known as generative grammar which stressed our unconscious knowledge of language and underlying structures to be found in all languages.

Linguistic determinism:

Refers to the view, propounded by Edward Sapir and Benjamin Lee Whorf, that language determines the way in which people think. Also termed the *linguistic relativity hypothesis*.

Marked:

A term used to state that a particular form is statistically unusual or unexpected in a certain context. For instance zero plurals in English such as *sheep* or *deer* are marked.

Metalanguage:

The language which is used to discuss language.

Metaphor:

An application of a word to another with which it is figuratively but not literally associated, e.g. *food for thought*. This process is very common in the use of language and may lead to changes in grammar as with the verb *go* in English where its spatial meaning has come to be used metaphorically for temporal contexts as in *He's going to learn Russian*.

Onomastics:

The linguistic study of names, both personal and place names. This field is particularly concerned with etymology and with the general historical value of the information which names offer the linguist.

Paradigm:

The set of forms belonging to a particular word-class or member of a word-class. A paradigm can be thought of as a vertical list of forms which can occupy a slot in a syntagm. Pronounced [ˈpærədaim].

Parameter:

Any aspect of language which can obtain a specific value in a given language, e.g. canonical word-order which can have the verb in a declarative sentence either before the subject, after the subject or after both subject and object. Contrast *principle* in this respect.

Performance:

The actual production of language as opposed to the knowledge about the structure of one's native language which a speaker has internalised during childhood (see Competence).

Productivity:

A reference to the extent that a given process is *not* bound in its application to a certain input. For instance the prefixation of *re-* to

verbs in modern English is productive because this can be done with practically all verbs, e.g. *re-think*, *re-do*, *re-write*. The term also refers — in syntax — to the ability of speakers to produce an unlimited number of sentences using a limited set of structures.

Psychological reality:

The extent to which the constructs of linguistic theory can be taken to have a basis in the human mind, i.e. to somehow be reflected in human cognitive structures. Many linguists are divided on this issue, one extreme claiming that this requirement of a theory is not necessary, other saying that it is the ultimate test of any respectable theory.

Reflexiveness:

The possibility of using language to talk about language; this is one of its delimiting characteristics with respect to other communication systems.

Rhetoric:

The technique of speaking effectively in public. Regarded in the past as an art and cultivated deliberately.

root 1) In grammar the unalterable core of a word to which all suffixes are added, e.g. *friend* in *un-friend-li-ness*. 2) In etymology, the earliest form of a word. 3) In phonetics, the part of the tongue which lies furthest back in the mouth.

Sapir-Whorf hypothesis:

The notion that thought is determined by language. While few linguists nowadays accept this strict link, there would seem to be some truth to the postulation of the two American anthropologists/linguists..

Sign language:

A communication system in which people use their hands to convey signals. In recent years sign language has been the object of linguists' attention and has come to be regarded as a fully-fledged system comparable to natural language with those individuals who are congenitally deaf and who learn sign language from childhood.

Structuralism:

A type of linguistic analysis which stresses the interrelatedness of all levels and sub-levels of language. It was introduced at the beginning of the century by Ferdinand de Saussure (1957-1913) as a deliberate reaction to the historically oriented linguistics of the 19th century and subsequently established itself as the standard paradigm until the 1950's when it was joined, if not replaced, by generative grammar.

Synchronic:

A reference to one point of time in a language. This may be the present but need not be. Forms a dichotomy with *diachronic*. Structural studies of language are usually synchronic and the Europeanists of the 19th century were diachronic in their approach.

Taxonomic:

A reference to linguistics in which the main aim is to list and classify features and phenomena. It is usually implied that no attempt for linguistic generalisations is made.

Theoretical linguistics:

The study of the structure of language without any concern for practical applications which might arise from one's work.

Underlying representation:

A representation of what is assumed by the linguist to be the structure which lies behind or forms the initial stage in the generation of a surface structure item. For instance one could say that /di:b/ is the underlying representation for German 'thief' and that the surface form [di:p] arises through the application of an automatic rule of final devoicing.

Unproductive:

Refers to a process which is bound to specific lexemes and hence cannot be used at will by speakers, e.g. umlaut is an unproductive process in German because it cannot be applied in plural formation with new words. Unproductive processes can nonetheless be statistically common, again umlaut is unproductive but occurs with words which have a high frequency in German because they belong to the core of the language — mainly names of beings, parts of the body, etc.

Zero:

Any element which is postulated by the linguist but which has no realisation in language, e.g. the plural morpheme which some linguists might assume to be present, but not realised, in a word like *die Wagen*.

Zoosemiotics:

The investigation of communications systems used by animals.

PHONETICS AND PHONOLOGY

Phonetics is the study of human sounds.

Phonology:

Phonology is the study of the sound system of a language or languages.

Affricate:

A phonetic segment which consists of a stop followed immediately by a fricative. Affricates act as units phonologically and are synchronically indivisible, e.g. /tʃ/ in *church* /tʃɜːtʃ/ or *judge* /dʒʌdʒ/.

Allophone:

The realisation of a phoneme. Each segment has different realisations which are only partly distinguishable for speakers. A phoneme can have different allophones, frequently depending on

position in the word or on a preceding vowel, e.g. [l] and [t] in English (at the beginning and end of a word respectively) or [ç] and [x] in German (depending on whether the preceding vowel is front or not). Allophones are written in square brackets.

Alphabet:

A system of letters intended to represent the sounds of a language in writing. For all west European languages the Latin alphabet has been the outset for their writing systems. However, because each language has a different sound system different combinations of letters have arisen and letters have come to be written with additional symbols attached to them.

Alveolar:

A classification of sounds which are formed at the alveolar ridge (the bone plate behind the upper teeth). Alveolar sounds are formed with the tip or the blade of the tongue. Examples are /t,d,s,z,l,n/ in English or German.

Alveolo-palatal:

A classification of sounds which are formed with the hard palate as passive articulator and the blade of the tongue as active articulator. Examples are the two English fricatives [ʃ] and [ʒ].

Ambi-dental:

A description of the manner of articulation of the Modern English fricatives /θ/ and /ð/. It is preferred to *inter-dental* as the tongue is not usually positioned between the teeth for these sounds.

Articulatory phonetics:

One of three standard divisions of phonetics which concerns itself with the production of sounds (compare acoustic and auditive phonetics).

Auditory phonetics:

One of the three standard divisions of phonetics which is concerned with the perception of sounds.

Bilabial:

Any sound produced using both lips, e.g. [p] oder [m].

Cardinal vowels:

A system of 8 rounded and 8 unrounded vowels which was originally developed by the English phonetician Daniel Jones and which is intended as a system of reference for the unambiguous classification of vowel values in a language. The cardinal vowels are represented in a quadrangle with vowels at each corner and two closed mid and open mid vowels, a pair in the front and a pair in the back of the quadrangle.

Consonant:

One of the two main classes of sound. Consonants are formed by a constriction in the supra-glottal tract (or occasionally at the vocal folds as with the glottal stop [?]). They divide into the chief types stops — /p,t,k/ for instance, fricatives — /f, θ, s/ — and approximants — /j, w/. Consonants contrast with vowels in their relatively low sonority and are hence found typically in the margins of syllables, i.e. in onsets and codas as in *stopped/stɒpt/*.

Contrastive:

Refers to any elements which are in opposition to each other. A phonetic distinction is contrastive if it has significance on the phonological level, i.e. if it distinguishes meaning.

Dental:

A place of articulation characterised by the tip of the tongue being held against the back of the upper teeth, for instance in the pronunciation of /t,d/ in Italian, Swedish, etc. Indicated by a subscript diacritic representing a tooth, i.e. [t̪, d̪]. The initial sounds in English *this* and *think* are sometime referred to as dental fricatives but the description ambi-dental is more appropriate as the tip of the tongue need only be in the region of the teeth.

Diphthong:

A vowel which is articulated with a change in tongue position between the beginning and end, e.g. /ai/ in English or German. Not all diphthongs have phonological status in a language. Historically, diphthongs tend to develop from long vowels.

Discrete:

A characteristic of human language where there is no continuous transition from one unit to another, e.g. /p/ and /b/ are separate, discrete sounds and speakers pronounce one or the other but not something intermediary between the two.

Ease of articulation:

A putative reason for sound change. It may play a role in allegro speech and possibly affect the sound system over time but cannot be assumed to be a generally valid principle on the phonological level.

Fricative:

A type of sound which is characterised by air passing a constriction somewhere between the glottis and the lips, e.g. [x, s, f, ʃ]. Turbulence arises when air flows through a narrow gap and it is this which causes the noise typical of fricatives. Fricatives can be voiced or voiceless. The equivalent term *spirant* is sometimes found.

Glide:

A sound which from the point of view of phonological classification lies between a vowel and a consonant, e.g. /j/ and /w/

in English. It is formed with little friction and has a high degree of sonority which accounts for why glides are found near the nucleus of syllables. Sometimes called a semi-vowel.

Glottal:

A term referring to sounds produced at the gap in the vocal folds. Such sounds can either be stops [?] or fricatives [h, f] — voiceless and voiced respectively.

Homophone:

Any set of words pronounced the same way, e.g. English *poor* and *pour* /pɔ:/ (Received Pronunciation) and German *Ferse* and *Verse*.

Homorganic:

Any set of sounds which are articulated at the same point in the vocal tract, e.g. the sounds in the syllable-coda of *mind* /maɪnd/ both of which are alveolar.

Intonation:

That part of the sound system of a language which involves the use of pitch to convey information. It consists of both accent (concerns individual words) and sentence melody (concerns word groups).

IPA:

A system of transcribing the sounds of languages which consists of some Latin and Greek letters and a variety of additional symbols and diacritics. The goal is to represent each recognisable sound in a unique fashion. The IPA was developed at the end of the last century; the acronym stands for *International Phonetic Alphabet*.

Labial:

A reference to a sound which is formed at the lips; this encompasses both bilabials like /p, m/ and labio-dentals like /f, v/.

labio-dental:

Describes a consonant which is formed by the lower lip making contact with the upper teeth as in English and German [f] and [v].

labio-velar:

Describes a consonant which is articulated by a constriction at the velum with rounding of the lips at the same time, e.g. with [w] in English.

Leveling:

The disappearance of contrasts — usually phonological or morphological — in the course of a language's development.

manner of articulation:

One of the three conventional parameters (the others are place of articulation and voice) which are used to specify how a sound is produced. Common types are plosives, fricatives and affricates.

minimal pair:

Any two words which are only distinguished by different sounds in a single position. Such word pairs are used in traditional

phonology to determine the status of sounds as phonemes, e.g. German *Kunst* # *Gunst* and English *railing* # *sailing* which show that the initial sounds in all these words are phonemes in the respective languages. Note that the spelling of minimal pairs is irrelevant.

Monophthong:

A vowel which is articulated with the tongue in a constant position, e.g. /o:/ in German *Boot*. Most long vowels in German are monophthongs while those in English are diphthongs, e.g. [bəʊt] for *boat*.

Nasal:

A sound, vowel or consonant, which is produced by opening the nasal cavity (through lowering of the velum).

Natural class:

A group of sounds which behave similarly. An example would be the group of obstruents (stops and fricatives) as only these are affected by final devoicing in German.

Onomatopoeia:

The putative imitation of a natural phenomenon (for instance bird song) by phonetic means. Contrary to the opinion of many speakers, onomatopoeia is not a major principle in historical phonology.

Optional:

A term which refers to allophonic processes which do not necessarily have to be carried out, cf. the shortening of high vowels before nasals as in Received Pronunciation *room* /ru:m/ > /rum/ or *been* /bi:n/ > /bin/; in general terms any process which is not obligatory.

Oral:

Articulated in the mouth. The term usually implies that the nasal cavity is not involved, e.g. in French there are distinct oral and nasal vowels.

Organs of speech:

Parts of the human anatomy which are used in speech production, e.g. the glottis, velum, palate, alveolar ridge, lips and the tongue of course. From an evolutionary point of view one can see that these functions are secondary adaptations and specialisations of organs which have some other primary function.

Palatal:

A place of articulation at the hard palate in the centre of the roof of the mouth.

Phone:

Any human sound which has not been classified in the phonology of a language.

Phoneme:

In traditional phonology the smallest unit in language which distinguishes meaning, e.g. /k/ and /g/ as seen in *coat* and *goat*. Each phoneme has one or more realisations, called allophones.

Phonemics:

The study of phonemes in language, their distribution, status and interrelationships.

Phonetic:

A reference to a phenomenon in the area of phonetics (often as opposed to phonology).

Phonetics:

The study of human sounds without immediate regard to their systematic status for a certain language.

Phonological:

A reference to the phonology of a language, i.e. to the deeper and more abstract organisation of the sounds of a language. A language's phonology is its inventory of phonemes and the rules for their combination, distribution, etc.; in short all the 'grammatical' or structural aspects of the sound level. In a wider sense, phonology could be said to subsume phonetics as its 'surface' aspect.

Phonology:

The study of the sound system of one or more languages. Phonology involves the classification of sounds and a description of the interrelationship of the elements on a systematic level.

Place of articulation:

The point in the vocal tract at which a sound is produced. This can be anywhere from the lips at the front to the glottis (the gap between the vocal folds) at the back. The most common place of articulation is the alveolar ridge just behind the upper teeth.

Plosive:

A sound which is produced with a complete blockage of the pulmonic airstream. Also called a stop, examples are /p,t,k/.

Pronunciation:

A collective reference to the manner in which sounds are articulated in a particular language. Given its concrete nature pronunciation is a matter of phonetics rather than phonology.

Prosody:

A term which refers to all the suprasegmental properties of language such as pitch, loudness, tempo and rhythm.

Received Pronunciation:

The standard pronunciation of British English. This stems originally from the speech of the middle and upper classes in London. In the course of the 19th century it developed into a sociolect, particularly when adopted by the *public schools*, and attained a wide distribution in Wales and Scotland as well. The term was coined by the English phonetician Daniel Jones.

Redundancy:

Superfluous information in language. Multiple marking of grammatical categories is the most common case of redundancy and

is often found in German, e.g. the plural *Dörfer* which takes both an ending *-er* and a shift in stem vowel from back to front (umlaut).

Rhotic:

A reference to a variety of a language in which a syllable-final /r/ is pronounced, for instance (generally) in American English as opposed to Received Pronunciation in England.

Rhythm:

All the patterns of strong and weak syllables in a language. The rhythm of English (and German) is characterised by the foot which consists of a stressed syllable and all unstressed syllables up to the next stressed one.

Segment:

A unit of speech which is identifiable and separate from others. It contrasts with the term *suprasegmental* which refers to those aspects of phonetic structure above the level of individual sounds.

Sibilant:

A sound which is pronounced with clear, hissing friction which is reminiscent of either /s/ or /ʃ/.

Speech:

The production of sounds using the organs of speech; contrasts directly with writing which is a secondary medium for communication via language.

Stop:

A consonant which is formed by blocking off the airstream completely, e.g. /p, t, k/. It contrasts directly with a fricative which does not involve an interruption of the airstream.

Stress:

The acoustic prominence of a syllable in a word. The physical correlates of stress can vary. Typically it involves the raising of the basic frequency and/or of volume matched by a prolongation of the syllable involved.

Structure:

A network of connections between elements of a system, for instance syllable structure is the set of relations which exist between parts of a syllable.

Suprasegmental:

A reference to phenomena which do not belong to the sound segments of language but which typically are spread over several segments, e.g. intonation, stress, tempo, etc.

Syllable:

The most important structural unit in phonology. A syllable consists of a series of sounds which are grouped around a nucleus of

acoustic prominence (usually a vowel). A closed syllable is one which has a coda, an open syllable has a codaless rhyme: *got /gɒt/* versus *go /gəʊ/*.

Syntagmatic:

A reference to the linear (or temporal) sequence of elements which contrasts directly with the vertical axis - the paradigmatic axis.

Tongue:

The most frequently used active articulator in all languages. The tongue can be divided into the following areas: the tip (Latin *apex*), blade (Latin *lamina*), back (Latin *dorsum*). The distinction between tip and blade is important for the production of dental and alveolar sounds. The tongue may also show a groove, for instance with palato-alveolar fricatives such as /ʃ, ʒ/. The tip can be made to roll in the escaping air-stream as is the case with the apical rolled /r/ of many Romance languages and in many southern varieties of German. The root of the tongue can be retracted in order to achieve a constriction of the larynx as with the so-called 'emphatic' sounds of Arabic.

Transcription:

A system of representing sounds in writing unambiguously. For phonological purposes a broad transcription is sufficient as long as the systemic distinctions in the particular language can be recognised. A narrow transcription is more typical of phonetics and may also be necessary in phonology where a feature relies on a phonetic basis which has to be specified. In English it is sufficient to transcribe /r/ as [r], although a narrow transcription would demand [ɹ] as strictly speaking [r] refers to an apical trill as in Spanish *perro* [pero] 'dog'.

Voiced:

Spoken with simultaneous vibration of the vocal folds.

Voiceless:

Spoken without the vocal folds vibrating; the folds can either be open (the normal state) or closed with the compression of air between them and the supra-glottal stop position producing sounds which are called *ejectives*.

MORPHOLOGY

Morphology is the study of words. How are they formed? What is their relationship to other words in the same language? It analyzes the structure of words and parts of words, such as stems, root words, prefixes, and suffixes. Morphology is essentially the grammar of words and deals with the forms of words, the relation between *take* and *took*, *dog* and *dogs*. Words can be related to other words by rules. For example, English speakers recognize that the words *dog*, *dogs*, and *dogcatcher* are closely related.

Allomorph:

A non-distinctive variant of a morpheme, e.g. *-keit* and *-heit* in German (*Heiterkeit*, *Schönheit*) which vary according to the final consonant of the base to which they are suffixed but share the same grammatical function of nominal derivation.

Article:

A grammatical word — or affix — used to specify a noun as definite or indefinite. It may vary for gender and case in languages with gender distinctions and a formal case system such as German.

Bound:

In a general sense, it is any form which cannot occur on its own. Both lexical and grammatical morphemes may be bound, but the number of the former is very limited, e.g. the first part of *raspberry* in English which does not occur independently.

Case:

An inflection which indicates the relationship of a noun to other elements in a sentence, e.g. the dative in German which broadly indicates the beneficiary of an action: *Sie hat ihm versprochen, nach Hause zu kommen*. There are, however, many instances in which case requirements are not semantically motivated, e.g. *gratulieren*, *imponieren* with the dative as opposed to *beglückwünschen*, *beeindrucken* with the accusative.

Closed class:

A term which refers to any linguistic level whose elements form a relatively small number which is not altered by the individual speaker. For instance phonemes, grammatical morphemes and syntactic structures are a closed set but the lexicon is definitely an open class as it is continuously expanding.

Declension:

A term which refers to the inflections of nouns, pronouns, adjectives, i.e. of nouns and the elements which can qualify them. The set of inflections is called a nominal paradigm. The term *declension* can also be used for classes of nouns which conform to a certain paradigm. It is the equivalent with nouns of the term *conjugation* with verbs.

Definite article:

A grammatical word which marks a following noun for definiteness. Not every language has such an element, though it is more common for the indefinite article to be missing. Languages furthermore vary according to whether they demand the definite article when nouns are used generically. This is a major difference between English and German, cf. *He is interested in philosophy*. *Er interessiert sich für die Philosophie*.

Degree:

It is a relational specification which is found with adjectives and adverbs. There are three degrees: 1) positive as in *small*, 2) comparative as in *smaller* and 3) superlative as in *smallest*.

Empty morph:

In some morphological analyses, an element which is posited as the carrier of a grammatical category but not present on the surface, for instance the word *sheep* could be said to contain an empty plural morph: *sheep* + Ø.

Function word:

It is a word which serves the purpose of indicating a grammatical category or relationship. It contrasts explicitly with a content word which has lexical meaning.

Inflection:

An alteration made to a word to indicate a certain grammatical category, e.g. number and case with nouns or person, number and tense with verbs. The number of inflections in a language can be taken as an indication of its type, a large number being characteristic of synthetic languages. Diachronically inflections arise from clitics which become unseparable from the lexical bases to which they are attached.

Irregular:

A form which can be regarded as an exception to a given pattern or rule, e.g. the plurals formed with a stem vowel change in Modern English, *man* : *men*, *tooth* : *teeth*.

Morph:

Any item of language which cannot be broken down any further without a loss of meaning. A morph usually realises a morpheme, the unit of grammar on an abstract level, e.g. /ʌn/ in *undoable* but also /ɪm/ in *impossible*.

Morpheme:

The smallest unit in a grammar which can contrast with another and which carries meaning. A morpheme can be an inflection, e.g. /ri:-/ in *rewrite* or a lexical word, *house*, *tree*, *sick*. A morpheme is an abstract unit and is realised by a morph; it is the approximate equivalent of a phoneme on the level of phonology.

Morphology:

The level of linguistics which is concerned with the structure of words, both from the point of view of inflections and of word-formation. It is traditionally located between phonology (the level of sounds) and syntax (the level of sentences).

Noun:

One of the major parts of speech which refers to objects in the non-linguistic world or to notions which are regarded as forming

entities parallel to real-world objects, e.g. by showing the property of countability.

Number:

A grammatical category which refers to quantity, usually along a binary axis, singular vs. plural, although some languages have other number distinctions involving a dual or a paucal category (referring to a few items).

Person:

A grammatical distinction which applies to the speaker, addressee or person talked about in verbal systems. Normally there is a distinction between singular and plural as well. There are more distinctions available than just those found in European languages, for instance languages may distinguish between a personal form for 'we' which includes the addressee and one which does not.

personal pronoun:

A grammatical form which refers to the speaker, addressee or person talked about and which occupies a position immediately next to the verb. In discourse it is used to avoid repetition of a name which has already been mentioned.

Plural:

A category in the grammar of all languages which refers to more than one object. All languages have a particular means for expressing this category, frequently by using a characteristic inflection.

Pronoun:

A grammatical element which refers to a noun previously mentioned; as such it has a deictic or anaphoric function as in *The lecturer was here and he spoke to us on a special topic*.

Singular:

A grammatical category which indicates a single occurrence of something. This is taken as the unmarked or normal instance in language, the plural, or even more so the dual, being marked forms, usually with special inflections characterising them.

Stem:

A part of a word to which prefixes and/or suffixes can be added. It is normally unalterable, though some morphological processes, such as umlaut in German, may change it. It is usually used synonymously with *root*.

Suffix:

Any element attached to the right-hand side of a stem. Suffixation is one of the major operations in morphology and is undertaken to indicate grammatical categories as in *stone : stone-s* where the *-s* is a plural marker suffix.

Suppletion:

A form in a paradigm (a set of morphologically related elements, such as the forms of a verb or noun) which etymologically comes from another source, e.g. the past tense form *went* in English is not formally related to the verb *go*.

Verb:

One of the two major lexical categories — the other is that of nouns — which is used to express a state or an action. The set of inflectional forms of a verb is termed a *conjugation* (parallel to *declension* with nouns). Verbs are usually distinguished for person and number along with tense and mood and frequently for aspect as well.

Word class:

A group of words which are similar in their grammatical characteristics: the kinds of inflections they take, their distribution in sentences and the relations they enter with other sets of words. Typically word classes are nouns, verbs, adjectives, adverbs, prepositions.

Word:

A general term for a morphological form which is internally stable, can stand on its own and which in principle can be moved to a new position in a sentence. In a synthetic language like German inflected words tend to be morphologically complex whereas in an analytic language like English these are usually simpler in structure.

Zero derivation:

The transfer of an element of one word class into another without any formal alteration. This is particularly common in English today, e.g. *breakfast* (noun) > *to breakfast* (verb). Another name for this phenomenon is *conversion*.

LEXICOLOGY

Lexicology is the study of the structure of the lexicon.

Base:

A free lexical word to which one or more endings can be added. A base can itself consist of more than one morpheme whereas a root contains only one.

Citation form:

The form of a linguistic item which is given when it occurs on its own. Often the form used for a dictionary entry, typically the nominative of nouns and the infinitive of verbs (in English and German).

Compound:

A term from derivational morphology, i.e. a lexicological term, which refers to a word which contains more than one lexical morpheme. This word is thus a new word which is gained by combining two or more morphologically simpler words, e.g. *girlfriend* from *girl* and

friend, teabreak from tea and break. The term is occasionally used in syntax, as in 'a compound sentence', when referring to a sentence which consists of clauses which in turn could function as sentences on their own.

Conversion:

The use of an item of one class in another without any formal change, e.g. *to breakfast* from *breakfast*. Conversion is a common feature of analytical languages such as English.

Lexeme:

The smallest (abstract) unit which is recognised as semantically independent in the lexicon of a language. A lexeme subsumes a set of forms which are related semantically, e.g. the lexeme *walk* unites the various forms *walk*, *walks*, *walked*, *walking*.

Lexical:

- 1) Pertaining to the vocabulary of a language and/or information which is deposited in the mental lexicon of the speaker.
- 2) Irregular, 'quirky', not conforming to a given pattern. This second use implies that a form cannot be derived by rule and hence it must be learned as an indivisible whole during language acquisition and stored in the lexicon in its full, unalterable form.

Lexicon:

The vocabulary of a language. It can refer to the book form of a dictionary (usually with an alphabetic listing of words) or the assumed lexicon which speakers possess mentally. The precise nature and organisation of this mental lexicon is much debated in linguistic literature as it is generally assumed to be radically different in organisation from a conventional dictionary.

Loan-word:

Any word which can be shown to have been imported from one language into another, that is which does not represent an historical continuation of an earlier form (although loan-words may be related at a greater time depth). The word *cardiac* is a Greek loan as it is derived from the word for 'heart' in the latter language although it is ultimately related to English *heart* as both stem from the same root in Indo-European **kerd*.

Neologism:

A new word in the vocabulary of a language. Frequently a borrowing but not necessarily so.

Opaque:

A term referring to any form or process which cannot be spontaneously understood by lay speakers. One could say that the word *gospel* is opaque for English speakers as they do not normally know that it comes from *good + spell*.

Thesaurus:

A kind of dictionary which consists of words grouped according to similarity in meaning.

Transparent:

A reference to a form or a process in morphology whose structure can be understood without any additional information, particularly of an historical nature, from the language concerned. For instance the German compound *Kinderarzt* is transparent but English *pediatrician*, which is derived from the Greek word for 'child' is not so. Former transparent compounds may change in the course of time. The English word *hussey* is a reduced form of 'housewife' and because of loss of transparency underwent a semantic shift to 'unpleasant woman' with the transparent *housewife* being re-introduced into the language. *Transparent* contrasts directly with *opaque*.

Type:

A reference to a unique word in a text, e.g. there are 6 types — but 8 tokens — in the following sentence: *The young girl spoke to the older girl* because the words *the* and *girl* occur twice.

Vocabulary:

The set of words in a language. These are usually grouped into word fields so that the vocabulary can be said to show an internal structure. The term *lexicon* is also found here but the latter has two meanings (the words of a language and one's mental storehouse for these words).

Word formation:

The second main branch of morphology (the other being inflection) and the chief process in lexicology (the study of the vocabulary of a language). Word formational processes are closely connected to a language's type: German as a synthetic language has much compounding but English as an analytic language has somewhat less, though in this sphere a tendency towards complex formations is noticeable, e.g. *part-financed, low-intensity, small-scale*.
