安徽省高等学校“十二五”规划教材

英语语言学

English Linguistics

（第2版）

主编 朱 跃 方瑞芬

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前言

《英语语言学》是安徽省“十二五”规划教材。教材编写人员主要由从事英语语言学教学的一线教授、副教授和博士生组成。

英语语言学课程是英语类专业主干课程之一。它涉及到语音学、音系学、词素学、句法学、语义学、语用学、社会语言学、应用语言学、认知语言学、计算语言学等内容，具有交叉学科的特点。在本科生阶段，《英语语言学》课程的学习有助于学生了解英语语言学的理论知识以及核心问题，使学生不仅知其然，而且知其所以然。同时，也有助于学生运用所学的英语语言学知识去解决英语使用中的问题。

遗憾的是，由于种种原因，很多学生认为语言学课程内容抽象、枯燥、脱离语言使用现实，对学习英语语言学课程的兴趣不大，甚至有抵触情绪。造成这种局面的原因是多方面的，与英语语言学教材本身也有一定的关系。有些教材的编写更多的是注重英语语言学知识的传授，编写理念较为传统，编写形式较为单一。

《英语语言学》是我们在总结前人经验的基础上，经过充分调研，反复论证和实践后所完成的教材。教材主要具有以下特点：

(1)强调基础性、实用性、启发性、自足性和时代性；

(2)把归纳法引入教材的编写之中，让学生通过分析语言事例，去探索、发现、总结语言使用规律，发展理性思维；

(3)强调理论与实践相结合；

(4)强调学术性与趣味性相结合；

(5)把启发式、讨论式、发现式和研究式的教学理念运用于教材编写之中。

教材编写主要分工如下:

Chapter 1 Introduction(朱跃);Chapter 2 Phonetics(朱跃)Chapter 3 Phonology(周平、朱跃);Chapter 4 Morphology(方瑞芬);Chapter 5 Syntax(朱跃);Chapter 6 Semantics(朱跃、裴振霞);Chapter 7 Pragmatics(周平、朱跃);Chapter 8 Language and Society(方瑞芬、朱跃);Chapter 9 Language and Culture(鲍曼);Chapter 10 Language and Acquisition(周颖);Chapter 11 Cognitive Linguistics(胡健);Chapter 12 Computer and Linguistics(朱玉彬)。在教材编写的过程中,许多专家与教师提出了宝贵的意见。在此,我们向他们表示由衷的感谢。由于我们水平有限,教材中错误难免,恳请广大教师与读者多提宝贵意见和建议,以便我们对教材进行修订再版。

朱 跃

2015 年 1 月于安徽大学

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Table of Contents

前　言 …… 1

Chapter 1　Introduction …… 1

1. What Is Linguistics? …… 1
   1.1　Definition of Linguistics …… 1
   1.2　Main Branches of Linguistics …… 2
   1.3　Why Study Language? …… 5
2. What Is Language? …… 6
   2.1　Definition of Language …… 6
   2.2　Design Features of Language …… 8
3. Important Distinctions in Linguistics …… 11
   3.1　Prescriptive Vs. Descriptive …… 11
   3.2　Synchronic Vs. Diachronic …… 12
   3.3　Speech Vs. Writing …… 13
   3.4　Langue Vs. Parole …… 14
   3.5　Competence Vs. Performance …… 16

Exercises …… 17

Further Readings …… 18

Chapter 2 Phonetics ····· 19

1. The Phonic Medium of Language ····· 19
2. Phonetics ····· 20
   - 2.1 What Is Phonetics? ····· 20
   - 2.2 Organs of Speech ····· 22
   - 2.3 Classification of English Speech Sounds ····· 25
   - 2.4 Broad Transcription and Narrow Transcription ··· 31

Exercises ····· 33

Further Readings ····· 34

Chapter 3 Phonology ····· 35

1. General Introduction to Phonology ····· 35
2. Basic Concepts of Phonology ····· 39
   - 2.1 Phone, Phoneme and Allophone ····· 39
   - 2.2 Phonemic Contrast, Complementary Distribution and Minimal Pair ····· 42
3. Some Phonological Rules ····· 44
   - 3.1 Sequential Rules ····· 44
   - 3.2 Assimilation Rules ····· 45
4. Suprasegmental Features: Stress, Tone and Intonation ····· 47
   - 4.1 Stress ····· 48
   - 4.2 Tone ····· 49
   - 4.3 Intonation ····· 49

Exercises ····· 50

Further Readings ····· 51

Chapter 4 Morphology ····· 52

1. Morphology ····· 52
2. Morphemes ····· 53
3. Types of Morphemes ····· 54
   3.1 Free Morphemes ····· 54
   3.2 Bound Morphemes ····· 55
4. Allomorph ····· 59
5. Word Formation Rules ····· 60
   5.1 Compounding ····· 62
   5.2 Derivation ····· 62
   5.3 Conversion ····· 63
   5.4 Clipping ····· 63
   5.5 Initialism ····· 64
   5.6 Acronym ····· 64
   5.7 Blending ····· 64
   5.8 Back-formation ····· 64

Exercises ····· 65

Further Reading ····· 66

Chapter 5 Syntax ····· 67

1. Syntactic Categories ····· 67
2. Combinational Rules ····· 68
3. Sentence Structure ····· 71
   3.1 The Structural Approach and IC Analysis ····· 71
   3.2 Advantages and Problems of IC Analysis ····· 72
   3.3 Transformational-generative Grammar ····· 75
4. Universal Grammar ····· 84
   4.1 The Observational Basis of UG ····· 84

4.2 General Principles of UG ····· 85
4.3 General Parameters of UG ····· 89
Exercises ····· 93
Further Readings ····· 94

Chapter 6 Semantics ····· 95
1. General Introduction ····· 95
2. Approaches to Semantics ····· 97
2.1 The Naming Theory ····· 97
2.2 The Conceptualist Theory ····· 99
2.3 Contextualism ····· 101
2.4 Behaviorism ····· 103
3. Lexical Meaning ····· 105
3.1 Sense and Reference ····· 105
3.2 Major Semantic Relationships between Words ··· 107
4. Sentence Meaning ····· 117
5. Analysis of Meaning ····· 119
5.1 Componential Analysis—a Way to Analyze Lexical Meaning ····· 119
5.2 Predication Analysis—a Way to Analyze Sentence Meaning ····· 120
Exercises ····· 123
Further Readings ····· 123

Chapter 7 Pragmatics ····· 125
1. What Is Pragmatics? ····· 125
2. Context ····· 126

3. Presupposition ····· 128
4. Speech Acts ····· 131
5. Cooperative Principle and Conversational Implications ····· 136
6. Deixis ····· 141
7. Politeness Principle ····· 142

Exercises ····· 145
Further Readings ····· 146

Chapter 8 Language and Society ····· 147

1. Speech Community ····· 147
2. Relationships between Language and Society ····· 149
3. Language Varieties ····· 152
3. 1 Dialects ····· 154
3. 2 Register ····· 168
3. 3 Mixture of Varieties ····· 169

Exercises ····· 174
Further Readings ····· 175

Chapter 9 Language and Culture ····· 176

1. General Introduction ····· 176
1. 1 The Relationship between Language and Culture ··· 176
1. 2 The Sapir-Whorf Hypothesis ····· 178
2. Cross-cultural Communication ····· 180
2. 1 Meaning as Sign ····· 180
2. 2 Cultural Clash ····· 182
2. 3 Stereotype ····· 185

Exercises ····· 187
Further Readings ····· 188

Chapter 10 Language and Acquisition …… 189

1. First Language Aquisition …… 189
   1.1 The Behaviorist Perspective …… 190
   1.2 The Innatist Perspective …… 192
   1.3 A Social Interactionist Perspective …… 195
2. Second Language Aquisition …… 197
   2.1 Connections between FLA and SLA …… 197
   2.2 Errors and Error Analysis …… 199
   2.3 Interlanguage …… 201
   2.4 Input Hypothesis …… 203
   2.5 Individual Differences …… 205
   2.6 Approaches and Methods to Second Language Teaching …… 210

Exercises …… 220

Further Readings …… 221

Chapter 11 Cognitive Linguistics …… 223

1. Introduction to Cognitive Linguistics …… 223
2. Three Main Ways of Approaching Language in Cognitive Linguistics …… 225
3. Categories and Categorization …… 227
   3.1 Classical Model of Categorization …… 229
   3.2 Prototype Theory of Categorization …… 231
4. Conceptual Metaphor and Metonymy …… 233
   4.1 Conceptual Metaphor …… 233
   4.2 Conceptual Metonymy …… 236
5. Iconicity …… 239
6. Grammaticalization …… 242

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Exercises 244
Further Readings 245

Chapter 12 Computer and Linguistics 247

1. Rationalism and Empiricism in Linguistic Research 247
2. Corpus Linguistics, Computational Linguistics and Natural Language Processing 249
3. Types of Corpora 251
4. Data Analysis in Corpus Linguistics 254
5. Corpus-driven Approach Vs. Corpus-based Approach 260

Exercises 262
Further Readings 263

References 264

Chapter 1

Introduction

1. What Is Linguistics?

1.1 Definition of Linguistics

• Relevant Language Use Observations and Questions to Ponder over

(1) What do you think linguistics is about?

(2) Discuss with your partner how we can study language in a scientific way.

(3) In your opinion, what's the goal of a linguist?

• Summaries to Make and Linguistic Viewpoints to Learn

Linguistics is the scientific study of language. The word "language" with no article implies that linguistics studies languages in general, but not any particular language. The word "study" means "investigate" or "examine" instead of "learn". Linguistics endeavors to answer the question of what language is and how it is represented in the mind.

A scientific study of language is based on the systematic investigation of data, conducted with reference to some general theory of language structure. Linguists focus on describing and explaining language and are not concerned with the prescriptive rules of the language. Linguists are

not required to know many languages and linguists are not interpreters. The underlying goal of the linguist is to try to discover the universals concerning language. That is, what are the common elements of all languages? The linguist then tries to place these elements in a theoretical framework that will describe all languages and also predict what can not occur in a language.

The scientific processes of linguistic study are:

① Certain linguistic facts are observed, generalization are formed;

② Hypotheses are formulated;

③ Hypotheses are tested by further observations;

④ A theory is constructed.

• Definition to Clarify

Linguistics: It is the scientific study of language.

1.2 Main Branches of Linguistics

• Relevant Language Use Observations and Questions to Ponder over

(1) In the previous section, we have learnt that linguistics is the scientific study of language. Learning linguistics means that we will learn about many aspects of human language. List some of the aspects you know which could be included in the study of linguistics.

(2) As language is a social phenomenon, so linguistics must have close links with other branches of social studies. Discuss with your partners and try to list some of the social sciences which may be related to the study of language.

• Summaries to Make and Linguistic Viewpoints to Learn

Learning linguistics means learning about many aspects of human language, including the physical properties and structure of sounds, words, sentences, and meaning. It can involve looking at how languages change over time; how they vary with different social factors, such as

age, sex, class, educational background and our birth place; how people use language in context to effect successful communication; or how people acquire or learn language.

• **Definitions to Clarify**

Phonetics: It is the scientific study of speech sounds, of how they are made (articulatory phonetics), transmitted (acoustic phonetics), and received (auditory phonetics). Phonetics has broad applications in a number of areas, including speech recognition, speech synthesis, forensic linguistics, speech therapy and language instruction.

Phonology: It analyses how sounds are organised in a language (phonological structure) and attempts to discover the principles that govern sound systems in languages in general.

Morphology: It examines the structure or form of words, how they are constructed of smaller units (called "morphemes") which have meaning (for example, *singer* is composed of *sing* + *er*).

Syntax: It investigates how words (and grammatical elements) are combined to form sentences, what speakers know about the grammatical structure of their language, how sentences are interrelated and what the general grammatical and cognitive principles are which explain these arrangements, relationships and knowledge.

Semantics: It is the study of meaning in language.

Sociolinguistics: It probes the relationship between language and society. This involves variation in language use which correlates with such things as the age, gender, social class, ethnicity, and general social attributes of speakers and hearers. Sociolinguists also deal with attitudes towards language, social aspects of language change and linguistic aspects of social issues.

Applied linguisticsis: It is the application of linguistic methods and findings to a number of areas. It is especially associated with language teaching methodology and second-language acquisition, but also involves language and the law, language and classroom education, child development, language and reading, speech therapy, language and public policy, translation, advertising and the like.

Historical linguistics: It studies how and why languages change.

Pragmatics: It concerned with how the meaning of linguistic acts depends on the context in which they are performed. It looks at language from the point of view of the users and the choices they make, and constraints on those choices, in social interaction. (For example, pragmatics studies what can make the sentence "Can you open the door?" count as a question in one situation and as a request for action in another).

Discourse analysis: It examines how language is structured beyond the sentence and thus involves topic and comment, narrative structure, cohesiveness, written vs. spoken language, and conversational analysis.

Psycholinguistics: It investigates the interrelationship between language and human cognition (the role of language as it affects memory, perception, learning) and the effects of psychological constraints on language (on its use, production, and comprehension). The best known area of psycholinguistics is the study of **child language acquisition**, how children acquire their native language.

Anthropological linguistics: It deals with the relationship between language and culture; also it involves the study of little-known languages in their cultural setting.

Cognitive linguistics: It is the scientific study of the relation between the way we communicate and the way we think; it is also an approach to language that is based on our experience of the world and the way we perceive and conceptualize it.

Computational linguistics or mathematical linguistics: It is the branch of linguistics which looks at languages essentially as formal systems, and applies computational techniques and concepts to understanding issues such as automatic machine translation and parsing. The goal of research in these areas is to uncover the logical and mathematical structures that underlie linguistic systems.

1.3 Why Study Language?

• Relevant Language Use Observations and Questions to Ponder over

(1) What good is the scientific study of language? Why does anyone do it? Why should you care about it? These are the sorts of questions you have a right to ask about any university course. Discuss with your partner the possible reasons why we should study language.

(2) Language is a part of everyone's life, but it is more central to some people than to others. Can you cite some examples to show that language is more important to some people than to others?

• Summaries to Make and Linguistic Viewpoints to Learn

A second-language teacher needs to be able to focus on problem areas, for example, by giving lots of practice or by simplifying other aspects of the language being learned. It is difficult, if not impossible, both to understand the source of the problem and to come up with ways of addressing it without understanding the nature of the material being learned, that is, what linguists and other language scientists study.

As a native language speaker, you will also face evaluations of your language by other people—teachers, colleagues, supervisors, even family and friends—throughout your life. You will get better at using language to accomplish your goals if you understand what sort of problem is involved (if there really is a problem). This is where linguistics can help.

You might work as a speech therapist, dealing with people with speech disabilities of one kind or another. Here the relevance of the scientific study of language is obvious; you first need to know what the norms of a language are before you can hope to address the ways in which your clients or patients deviate from these norms.

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