Oxford

CONCISE DICTIONARY OF

LINGUISTICS

牛津语言学词典

Colourless Green Ideas Sleep Furiously

牛津英语百科分类词典系列

Oxford Concise Dictionary of

Linguistics

牛 津 语 言 学 词 典

P. H. MATTHEWS

Oxford Concise Dictionary of

Linguistics

P. H. MATTHEWS

Oxford   New York
OXFORD UNIVERSITY PRESS

出版说明

随着改革开放的不断深入以及国际交流的日趋广泛,外语学习已经不仅仅局限于语言技能的培养。通过英语获取专业知识、提高专业水平、跟踪学科的最新发展已经成为时代的要求。因此,目前国内急需一批用英语编纂的专业词典。

牛津英语百科分类词典系列是由牛津大学出版社组织编纂的一套工具书。该系列涉及语言学、文学、文化、艺术、社会学、数学、物理学、化学、生物学、医学、食品与营养、计算机等社会科学和自然科学门类近百种,均由造诣很深、经验丰富的专家撰写。作为第一批,我们从中精选了 52 本,以满足国内读者的需要。词典用浅显的英语,精确地解释了常用的专业词汇,充分体现了牛津大学出版社在出版工具书方面严谨的传统。

该系列词典可作为大专院校各专业的学生以及专业技术人员学习专业知识、提高专业英语能力的参考书。

本社编辑部

Introduction

This is a 'concise dictionary' and it is 'of linguistics'. What should such a book be like and what should it include?

Linguistics is defined in general dictionaries as 'the science of language' or 'the scientific study of language'. In the more cautious wording of *The New Shorter Oxford English Dictionary*, it is 'the branch of knowledge that deals with language'. But although it is the only academic discipline that deals with language alone, and there are aspects of language that it alone is concerned with, its practitioners cannot claim a monopoly of the whole of their subject matter. A range of other disciplines, from the study of literature to computer science, deal with language in one way or another, and the boundaries between them and linguistics are not fixed. It would indeed be a pity if they were. How far into these should the entries in this dictionary go?

Let us start from the centre and work outwards. Everyone will agree that grammar, in a wider or narrower sense, is part of linguistics: in its widest sense, it includes both the study of the structure of words and of syntactic constructions, and that of sound systems. In the second half of the twentieth century these fields have seen an explosive development of technical theory, and a great deal of this dictionary is taken up with it. Everyone will agree that linguistics is concerned with the lexical and grammatical categories of individual languages, with differences between one type of language and another, and with historical relations within families of languages. These are potentially bottomless pits, and strict limitations are needed to avoid falling into them; but I hope I have included what users will judge to be important. Many languages are both spoken and written, and although the nature and history of writing systems are not always covered in university courses in linguistics, it is hard to see in what other dictionary one might expect to look them up. Apart from the details of individual systems and the technicalities of their description, there are also issues of general theory that belong to linguistics alone: that of change in language is one of them. But beyond this there are problems, and it has to be acknowledged that in a number of cases, involving both single entries and classes of entry, I could have decided differently.

Should I, for example, have included entries for parsing strategies in computational linguistics? The name of this field suggests that it is a branch of linguistics and certainly, once upon a time, it was. But it has increasingly become a part of computer science, addressing problems of its own that do not bear, and quite properly are no longer claimed to bear, on the nature of language as such. I have therefore asked myself whether someone whose interests are centred on the topics that linguists must know about is any poorer, as a linguist, for not

knowing this field as well, and, after some soul-searching, have drawn in my net accordingly. The same test has been applied to other aspects of language or speech processing, and to much of, for example, the traditional terminology of rhetoric. It also applies to the study of methods in language teaching, which, as part of what is conventionally called 'applied linguistics', again appears, at first sight, to belong to our subject. But we are past the days when this was seen as literally an application of linguistics, and linguists in general do not still expect to gain many insights from it. A further test was whether, in drafting an entry, the terms on which a definition would rest are themselves terms in linguistics or in a field that is clearly separate. A dictionary of linguistics cannot systematically include things that belong to computer science in general, or to acoustics, or to anatomy or physiology, or to general psychology or the social sciences, even when, as terms in neighbouring subjects, they are used by linguists in some branches of their own. But it would frustrate the reader if other entries were then to take them for granted. In some cases this has forced me to cut corners: something must be in and, even if its explanation has to be less precise than a technical definition would be, it may at least be possible for readers who need the relevant entry to get some help from it. In other cases even circumlocution has failed and, where the term is marginal, I have judged it safer to leave it out.

The need to cut corners was most pressing in some areas of phonetics and of semantics. Acoustics is not in general part of linguistics; nor, at least as I conceive it, are topics such as the anatomy of the larynx. But some specific terms in acoustics are, and the distinctions between different types of phonation, which is a hard enough topic in our present state of knowledge, might be made more precise if anatomical detail could be assumed. Philosophy and logic are not part of linguistics either, but the literature on semantics is full of terms that derive from them. Many have a long history and are not univocal; sometimes their use by linguists reflects this only in part; sometimes, as linguists have borrowed them, their senses have slid yet further. But since they do belong to another discipline, a dictionary of linguistics sometimes cannot do more than pick up a fag end. It is perhaps in this area that I feel least happy with the solutions I have at times been driven to.

In the centre of the subject it is, of course, much easier both to lay down principles and to apply them. Since this is a dictionary, it does not include entries that are purely encyclopaedic. Since it is a concise dictionary, my aim has been to explain as many things as possible and as briefly as possible, not, as might be done in another kind of dictionary, to cover less but cover it more expansively. But some things have to be left out. There must, for example, be entries for some individual languages: those that have speakers safely into the millions, those that are important in the history of scholarship, those that, quite simply, the majority of those who will buy this book will feel

they should be able to look up. But most languages meet none of these criteria and, however one counts, they are well in the thousands. There should, I believe, be notes on individual scholars, some of them still living. But which? I have tried to limit such entries to people who are cited for their contribution to general linguistics, as opposed to the study of a particular language or family. But if I had relaxed that test the list could have gone on and on. There must also be entries for schools, or for the competing models of syntax, phonology, and so on that tend to define schools. Where these are more than one-man bands they are, I hope, in. But both schools and individual scholars also tend to develop specialized terminology, both new terms and altered senses of old ones. These sometimes pass into general currency and then, of course, they must be included. But where they remain peculiar to a specific model, and are not needed in the entry that explains the model itself, I have had to leave them out. If I had not, the dictionary would again have been much larger.

There must also be limits on what certain classes of entry contain. Under the headings for individual languages, I have said at the least where they are spoken and what family, if any, they are known to belong to. But I have not in general said how many people speak them, and in most cases I do not think this information can be given without reference to surveys at specific dates and the specific evidence and criteria that they used. That is more than a concise dictionary can or should do. I have also refrained from saying anything about their structure: it would, for a start, take more space than can be spared. In the entries for grammatical categories, I have given concrete illustrations where they can be drawn from languages with which a substantial body of readers will be familiar. These naturally tend to be European. Where this cannot be done the illustrations are schematic. I had not at first intended that they should be and, in failing to decorate some entries in this way, I still feel rather as my wife would if she were forced to go to town without make-up. But decoration is, in reality, all it would be. A monograph or textbook must, of course, supply specific evidence that a category exists. But a dictionary need not and cannot. Its job is simply to make clear how the term is used, and a concrete illustration will at best get in the way if it comes from a language which few readers know and whose general structure is unfamiliar. At worst, there was a danger that I would misunderstand my source or use one that was itself wrong and, without references, no one might know what it was. I would like to feel that, if there are mistakes, they are unequivocally my own.

The rest is mainly a matter of style. In line with other Oxford dictionaries, I have used an asterisk to point to related entries: although its uses in linguistics are for other purposes, I do not think that, in practice, this will cause confusion. Where I refer to scholars for whom there are also entries, I have used their surname without initials, with a first name in brackets where necessary: thus 'Chomsky'

or '(Daniel) Jones'. Where an abbreviation is common I have given an entry for it, unless it immediately precedes the term it abbreviates: thus '**ABS** = absolutive'. The abbreviation '*cf.*' means, as usual, 'compare'; I have also used an *ad hoc* abbreviation 'opp.' to indicate a term which is the opposite of the one defined: thus '**bound** . . . Opp. free'. Where a term is used in two or more related senses I have distinguished them within an entry: thus '**substratum. 1.** . . . **2.** . . .'. But where senses are effectively unrelated I have separated the entries: thus '**head (1)**' and '**head (2)**'. When a definition begins with words in round brackets, they generally indicate what an adjective or the like is used of: thus '**consecutive**. (Clause, etc.) indicating . . .'. In giving examples, I have indicated stress or emphasis, where necessary, by putting a syllable in small capitals: thus '*I need the* HAMM*er*' (not e.g. the screwdriver). These are often preceded by an accent which gives a rough indication of the intonation: thus '*He's* `coming*'* (with the pitch falling from 'co' onwards), '*He's not* ´coming*'* (with the pitch rising), '*Is he* ´coming?*'* (fall followed by a rise). Other conventions, e.g. in the use of italics, follow what is now general practice.

Finally, I have included pronunciations (in the IPA transcription used in *The New Shorter Oxford English Dictionary*) only when I thought that readers might be in doubt. For a dictionary of this kind to include them throughout did seem otiose.

Acknowledgements

Directory of Symbols

Symbols and other forms of notation are explained in entries headed by their names: for example, for the uses of '[ ]', see the entry for 'square brackets'. The complete list is as follows.

FOR	SEE	FOR	SEE
´	acute	$a, b, \ldots$	italics
< >	angled brackets	λ	lambda operator
→, ←·	arrow	μ	mu
*	asterisk	+	plus sign
	bar, macron	?	question mark
{ }	braces	( )	round brackets
˘	breve	σ	sigma
^	circumflex	/	slash
—	dash	A, B, . . .	small capitals
#	double cross	[ ]	square brackets
!	exclamation mark	>, <	tailless arrow
∃	existential quantifier	¯, ~	tilde
`	grave	∀	universal quantifier
α, β, . . .	Greek letter variables	', ,	vertical line
·	hyphen	∅	zero
' '	inverted commas		

Contents

A

A. 1. = adjective. **2.** = agent (2); *cf.* P, S (3). **3.** = argument, as
*A-bound.

abbreviated clause = reduced clause.

abbreviation. *See* acronym; blend; clipping.

abbreviatory convention. Any convention which allows a
*generative grammar to be shortened by collapsing two or more rules
into one. E.g. a phrase-structure rule A′ → A + Comp (a constituent
within an adjective phrase can consist of an adjective plus a
complement) can be combined with a rule A′ → A into the single
expression A′ → A (Comp). By the relevant convention 'A (Comp)' is
understood as 'either A or A + Comp'.
 The abbreviated expression is technically a *rule schema.

abduction. Process of reasoning by which, e.g. from 'All dogs bark'
and 'This animal barks', one draws the conclusion 'This animal is a
dog'.
 Central, in one view, when people develop their native language.
E.g. they may learn that if a noun has the ending -*s* it is plural: so, as
one premiss, 'All noun forms in -*s* are plural'. They may then want to
use some noun in the plural. Call the form required *f*: so, as a second
premiss, '*f* is plural'. By abduction, the conclusion will be '*f* is a form in
-*s*': therefore, all else being equal, a form in -*s* is what they will use. In
this process of reasoning the conclusion does not necessarily follow:
thus the noun in question might have a plural that does not end in -*s*.
But as the result of it the language may change, with -*s* generalized to
nouns that did not previously have it.
 Abductive change is change due, it is claimed, to abduction.
Abduction as a process of reasoning was distinguished by Peirce, who
stressed its role in human life in general.

abessive. *Case indicating that someone or something is absent: e.g.
schematically, *I came money*-ABESS 'I came without money'. From Latin
abesse 'to be away, be absent'.

Abkhaz. North West *Caucasian language, spoken between the west
end of the Caucasus Mountains and the coast of the Black Sea.

ablative (ABL). *Case whose basic role, or one of whose basic roles, is
to indicate movement away from some location: thus Latin *cedit Rōmā*
('departed Rome-ABLSG') 'He left Rome'.

ablative absolute. *Absolute construction in Latin in which a
participle and its subject are in the ablative case and are subordinated,

with no other mark of linkage, to the rest of the sentence: e.g. in the sentence *urbe capta* '(the) city-ABLSG having-been-taken-ABLSG' *Caesar recessit* 'Caesar withdrew'.

ablaut. Morphological variation, in Germanic and other *Indo-European languages, of a root vowel. E.g. in Ancient Greek the root of the verb 'to leave' appeared in three forms: *leip-* in the present; *loip-*, in the perfect or in the adjective *loipós* 'left over'; *lip-*, in the aorist or as the first member of compounds. This illustrates the three original '**grades**' of ablaut: the *e* grade, the *o* grade, and the zero or reduced grade, with neither *e* nor *o*.

Similarly, in English, of vowel variations in *strong verbs (e.g. *drive, drove, driven*) or between verbs and nouns (*sing, song*), whether or not they derive directly from the Indo-European system.

A-bound. *Bound (2) by an element in the normal syntactic position of a subject or other *argument of a verb. E.g. in *I saw myself*, the reflexive *myself* is A-bound by its antecedent *I*.

A term in *Government and Binding Theory, where it is claimed that some elements, like reflexives, must be A-bound. Other elements need not be: when they are bound by an antecedent not in such a position they are said to be '**Ā-**' or '**A'-bound**'.

abrupt. *Distinctive feature in the scheme proposed by *Jakobson. Characterized acoustically by 'a spread of energy over a wide frequency region': thus, in particular, a feature of oral stops as opposed to fricatives. Also called 'discontinuous' or 'interrupted': opp. continuant.

ABS = absolutive.

absolute. (Syntactic element) not accompanied by an element to which one might expect it to be linked. E.g. in *This is bigger*, *bigger* is an **absolute comparative**, not linked, as other comparatives are, to a standard of comparison (*bigger than . . .*); in *His is bigger*, *his* is similarly an **absolute possessive**, not linked, as possessives in general are, to a noun (*his garden, his kitchen, . . .*). An **absolute case**, e.g. in Turkish, is so called because it is realized by a root alone, unaccompanied by an affix.

An **absolute construction** is one in which a subordinate element is not linked by a conjunction or in any other specific way to the rest of a sentence. E.g. in *We left, the wine having run out*, the last five words stand in an absolute relation to *we left*: cf. *We left because the wine had run out* (with the conjunction *because*), or *We left, having finished the wine* (with a direct relation between *having* and *we*).

From Latin *absolutus* 'freed from linkage'.

absolute neutralization. Term in *Generative Phonology for the suppression in all contexts of an underlying difference between

elements. E.g. in a language with *vowel harmony, a single open vowel might relate sometimes to front vowels and sometimes to back vowels: a distinction might therefore be established between a front 'a' and a back 'ɑ', which undergoes absolute neutralization after the rules for harmony have applied.

absolute synonymy. *See* synonymy.

'absolute universal'. A *linguistic universal that is genuinely universal: i.e. that holds for all languages, without exception. Opp. relative universal, statistical universal.

absolutive (ABS). *Case which identifies both the *patient in a basic transitive construction and a single argument or valent in an intransitive. E.g. schematically, *men bread-ABS ate* 'The men ate the bread'; *bread-ABS disappeared* 'The bread disappeared'. The *agent in the transitive construction will then be *ergative: *bread-ABS ate men-ERG*. The case is called 'absolutive' because, in many languages, it is distinguished by the absence of an affix.

Thence in general of syntactic elements that unite the same roles, whether or not the language has cases.

'absorption'. **1.** Used variously of phonological changes or processes in which one element is seen as incorporated in another. Thus **'tonal absorption'** is a process in some languages of West Africa by which the ending of a *contour tone (rising ˇ, falling ˆ) is 'absorbed' by a following syllable whose tone is at the same level: rising ˇ plus high ´ → low ˋ plus high ´; falling ˆ plus low ˋ → high ´ plus low ˋ. *Cf.* fusion. **2.** Process in which a case or case role is assigned to one element in a construction and can then no longer be assigned to another.

abstract. (Structure, representation) which differs from that which is most transparent. E.g. the representation of *righteous* as 'rixt-i-ɔs', proposed at an underlying level in *Generative Phonology at the end of the 1960s, is more abstract than one which corresponds closely to a phonetic transcription [rʌɪtʃəs]. Similarly, a representation of the syntax of a sentence is more abstract the more the order in which the words are arranged and the units and categories to which they are assigned differ from their order and potential grouping in speech.

Since the end of the 1960s most linguists have tried to put restrictions on the degree of abstractness that their models will permit: e.g. to exclude representations such as 'rixt-i-ɔs'. But it has been hard to propose firm limits that all will accept; hence in phonology a long-standing **abstractness** controversy.

'abstract case'. *See* case.

abstract noun. One which denotes an abstract state, property, etc.: e.g. *love, happiness*. Opp. concrete.

ACC = accusative.

Accadian = Akkadian.

accent (1). A phonological unit realized by auditory prominence, especially within a word. E.g. in *morning* the first syllable is perceived as more prominent than the second: in phonetic transcription, [ˈmɔːnɪŋ]. This distinguishes it as the **accented** syllable, or the one that 'carries the accent'. Originally of *pitch accents in Ancient Greek; thence of *stress accents, e.g. in English; thence also applied to peaks of prominence in larger units, such as sentences. E.g. in *He'll talk to* ´ME ('to me, not someone else'), the 'sentence accent', or *sentence stress, falls on *me*.

The accents in writing, as in French *père, bête, céder*, originally distinguished pitches in Greek, the acute a high pitch, the circumflex a falling pitch, the grave a low pitch. But they have since been used for many other purposes, to distinguish length or quality of vowels, different consonants, homonyms, and so on, with others added in the spelling of various languages.

accent (2). A variety of speech differing phonetically from other varieties: thus, as in ordinary usage, 'a Southern accent', 'Scottish accents'. Normally restricted by linguists to cases where the differences are at most in phonology: further differences, e.g. in syntax, are said to be between *dialects.

acceptable. (Sentence, etc.) which native speakers will not see as contrary to usage. Often = grammatical (2), but many scholars insist on a distinction, drawn by Chomsky in the 1960s, between the acceptability of a sentence, taken as a datum, and its conformity to the rules of a specific grammar. Thus a sentence like *The man the girl your son knew saw arrived* may be unacceptable to speakers. But its structure conforms to general rules that may be posited for *relative clauses: *the man ₍[the girl ₍[your son knew] saw] . . . So, by hypothesis, it is grammatical, and its unacceptability must be explained by other factors, such as the difficulty of keeping track of it in short-term memory.

accessibility scale. A scale of elements or categories in order of diminishing applicability of some type or types of process. E.g. in English, a direct object (DO) can generally be made the subject of a passive: *Harry saw them → They were seen by Harry*. So can an indirect object (IO), but with more restrictions and exclusions. So too a locative (Loc), but with even more restrictions and exclusions. These elements can thus be said to form a scale: DO > IO > Loc, where x > y means that x is more open to the process.

Similar scales are often formulated across languages: e.g. the *NP accessibility hierarchy.