

A LEARNING GUIDE TO ENGLISH LINGUISTICS

英语语言学学习指南

马腾 主编



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前 言

语言是人类认识和改造主客观世界的工具,语言活动是人们形成思想和表达思想的主要途径。语言学与哲学、逻辑学、历史学、考古学、民族文化学、社会学、心理学、文学和认知科学等关系密切。现代语言学甚至与信息论、系统论、数学、计算机科学、通讯工程、人工智能等学科联姻,孕育了认知语言学、数理语言学、计算语言学、语料库语言学。因此,认识语言、了解语言、学习语言、研究语言,意义重大。

“英语语言学”是高等院校英语专业的核心主干课程。该课程重在传授英语语言的基本知识和基本理论,培养学生的英语语言基本技能和综合素质。该课程旨在提高学生对语言的本质和功能的认识,了解语言学与教育学、心理学、社会学、文化学、文学等跨学科研究的关系及其发展现状和趋势,拓宽学生的思维与学术视野,培养并激发学生对语言研究的兴趣,为其在相关领域的学习及研究打好基础。该课程有助于培养学生的语言能力、认知能力、思辨能力、语用能力和科学研究能力。

鉴于英语语言学现有教学学时的有限、民族院校英语专业学生的实际和该课程在人才培养方案中的重要性考虑,我们以戴炜栋、何兆熊教授的《新编简明英语语言学教程》和胡壮麟教授的《语言学教程》(第三版)为基础,编写了《英语语言学学习指南》。全书主要由三部分构成,另有两个附录。第一部分共12章。每章分别由以下五节构成:1)重难点提要;2)导入背景信息;3)练习;4)练习答案;5)自学书目。第二部分为现代语言学流派。第三部分介绍了37位著名语言学家和语言哲学家。该部分的编排基本与第二部分各语言学流派相对应。附录一提供了10套语言学测试样卷;附录二用英汉两种语言列举了重点语言学术语。《英语语言学学习指南》由马腾负责设计、主编总体框架,各成员分别对各章的练习(包括各大学研究生入学考题和英语专业8级考点)、语言学术语和自学书目部分进行充实。具体如下:朱新华负责音系学、形态学、句法学;孔令笛负责语义学、语用学、社会语言学和历史语言学;张皖

瑾负责文化语言学、心理语言学和神经语言学;陶瑞负责语言习得和二语习得;马薇红、杨晓丽负责现代语言学流派。

《英语语言学学习指南》以理论和实践相结合为原则,以分析、探究、自学为主导,脉络清晰、重点突出,体现了工具性和实用性的特点,力求满足英语专业自考生、本科生、立志报考英语专业研究生、汉语言文学专业语言学和应用语言学研究生、外国语言学和应用语言学研究生以及广大语言教师的学习和研究需求。

在编写过程中,编者参阅了国内外多种相关文献,书后参考文献中均已列出。在此,谨对所有的编著者表示真诚的谢意。本书能与读者见面,亦惠于北方民族大学在经费上的大力支持以及责任编辑朱晓灵老师的辛勤工作,再次深表谢忱。

囿于学识和水平,难免有错误和疏漏之处,敬祈专家、学者和同行批评指正。

马 腾

2009年2月

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PART ONE

Major Branches of Modern Linguistics

Chapter I Introduction

1.1 Key Points and Difficulties

1. Linguistics
2. Language
3. Design features of language
4. Functions of language
5. Major distinctions in linguistics
6. Scope of linguistics

1.2 Lead-in Background Information

1. Principles in linguistic study
 - 1) exhaustiveness; 2) consistency; 3) economy, and; 4) objectivity
2. The design features of language
Arbitrariness, duality, productivity, displacement, cultural transmission and interchangeability (For details, see 1.4.6.)
3. Origin of Language
The bow-wow theory, pooh-pooh theory, “yo-he-ho” theory, ding-dong theory, and so on.
4. Functions of Language
Informative, interpersonal, performative, emotive, phatic, recreational and metalingual, etc.
5. Branches of Linguistics
 - 1) Internal Linguistics
phonetics, phonology, morphology, syntax, semantics and pragmatics.
 - 2) External Linguistics
applied linguistics such as psycholinguistics, sociolinguistics, anthropological linguistics, computational linguistics, and so on.

6. Major Distinctions in Linguistics

descriptive vs. prescriptive; synchronic vs. diachronic; langue and parole; competence and performance, etc.

7. General writing systems

- 1) alphabetic writing (the written forms representing the individual sounds), e. g. English and French;
- 2) syllabic writing (the written forms representing syllables), e. g. Japanese;
- 3) logographic writing (the written forms representing individual words), e. g. Chinese.

1.3 Practice

Directions: There are five parts in this exercise. Read the directions in each part carefully and finish the tasks concerned.

1. Slot-filling

Directions: Fill in the blanks with the most suitable words.

1. Language, broadly speaking, is a means of _____ communication.
2. The four principles in the linguistic study are (1) exhaustiveness, (2) consistency, (3) economy and (4) _____.
3. In any language, words can be used in new ways to mean new things and can be combined into innumerable sentences based on limited rules. This feature is usually termed _____.
4. Language has many functions. We can use language to talk about itself. This function is _____.
5. Theory that primitive man made involuntary vocal noises while performing heavy work has been called the _____ theory.
6. The writing system of English is known as the sound writing system while that of Japanese as _____ writing system.
7. The theory that language arose from instinctive emotional cries, expressive of pain or joy has been called the _____ theory.
8. _____ is the branch of linguistics which studies the form of words.
9. The theory that arose from human beings instinctive need for contact with his companion has been called _____ theory.
10. Linguistics is the scientific study of _____.
11. Modern linguistic is _____ in the sense that the linguist tried to discover what language is rather than lay down some rules for people to observe.
12. One general principle of linguistic analysis is the primacy of _____ over writing.

13. The description of a language as it changes through time is a _____ study.
14. Saussure put forward two important concepts. _____ refers to the abstract linguistic system shared by all members of a speech community.
15. Linguistic potential is similar to Saussure's langue and Chomsky's _____.

II. Multiple Choice

Directions: Choose the best answer and fill in the blank in each item below.

16. Language is a system of arbitrary vocal symbols used for human _____.
- A. contact
B. communication
C. relation
D. community
17. Language is _____.
- A. instinctive
B. non-instinctive
C. natural
D. genetically transmitted
18. A linguist regards the changes in language and language use as _____.
- A. unnatural
B. something to be feared
C. natural
D. abnormal
19. Which of the following words is entirely arbitrary?
- A. Tree
B. Crash
C. Typewriter
D. Bang
20. The function of the sentence "Water boils at 100 degrees Centigrade" is _____.
- A. interrogative
B. directive
C. informative
D. performative
21. _____ is a grammatical description of a language specially designed as an aid to teach that language to native or foreign learners.
- A. Descriptive linguistics
B. Prescriptive linguistics
C. Applied linguistics
D. Theoretical linguistics
22. In Chinese when someone breaks a bowl or a plate, the host or the people present are likely to say *sui sui ping an* (every year be safe and happy) as a means of controlling the forces which the believers feeling might affect their lives. Which function does it perform?
- A. Interpersonal
B. Emotive
C. Performative
D. Recreational
23. Which of the following property of language enables language users to overcome the barriers caused by time and place?
- A. Transferability
B. Duality
C. Displacement
D. Arbitrariness

- _____ 37. Arbitrariness of language makes it potentially creative, and conventionality of language makes a language be passed from generation to generation. As a foreign language learner, the latter is more important for us.
- _____ 38. By diachronic study we mean to study the changes and development of language.
- _____ 39. Langue is relatively stable and systematic while parole is subject to personal and situational constraints.
- _____ 40. Language change is universal, ongoing and arbitrary.
- _____ 41. In the language classrooms nowadays the grammar taught to students is basically descriptive, and more attention is paid to developing learners' communicative skills.
- _____ 42. Language is a system of arbitrary, written signs which permit all the people in given culture, or other people who have learned the system of that culture, to communicate or interact.
- _____ 43. The relation between form and meaning in human language is natural.
- _____ 44. Saussure's exposition of synchronic analysis led to the school of historical linguistics.
- _____ 45. Applied linguistics is the application of linguistic principles and theories to language teaching and learning.

IV. Terms Definition

Directions; Define the following items.

- | | |
|---|------------------------------|
| 46. Design features * | 47. Discreteness of language |
| 48. The recreational function of language | 49. Macrolinguistics * |
| 50. Parole * | 51. Competence |
| 52. Cultural transmission * | 53. Displacement * |
| 54. Phatic function of language * | 55. Diachronic linguistics |
| 56. Descriptive linguistics * | 57. Linguistic potential |

V. Short Answer Questions

Directions; Answer the following questions briefly and give examples if necessary.

58. Point out three ways in which linguistics differs from traditional grammar.
59. What are the attributes of language that must be included in the definition of language?
60. Illustrate the difference between synchronic and diachronic linguistics with a certain kind of game you know.
61. * What is your understanding of descriptive linguistics vs. prescriptive linguistics (e. g. merits and/or weakness)?
62. In what way do langue, competence and linguistic potential agree? In what way do they differ?

63. Make a comment on synchronic vs. diachronic perspective of language* .
64. Explain speech and writing with examples.
65. Comment on the following statement: "In linguistics, 'language' only means what a person says or said in a given situation."

1.4 Keys to Practice

I. Slot-filling

- | | | |
|---------------------------|-----------------|-----------------|
| 1. verbal | 2. objectivity | 3. productivity |
| 4. metalingual function | 5. yo-he-ho | 6. syllabic |
| 7. pooh-pooh | 8. Morphology | 9. contact |
| 10. language | 11. descriptive | 12. speech |
| 13. Diachronic linguistic | 14. Langue | 15. competence |

II. Multiple Choice

16. B 17. B 18. C 19. A 20. C 21. C 22. C 23. C 24. B 25. D
26. A 27. C

III. True or False Questions

28. [F] Many animals communicate with special calls, which have corresponding meanings. That is, the primary units have meanings but cannot be further divided into elements. So what most animal communication systems lack is the secondary level of articulation.
32. [F] Halliday's linguistic potential is similar to langue and competence.
33. [F]
34. [F] It serves an interrogative function.
36. [F] The deaf-mute can still think conceptually. They can use other forms such as visual and tactile impressions. They can speak without sounds. They use a special language to communicate.
40. [F] It is not arbitrary. It is due to social and linguistic factors.
42. [F] It should be vocal symbols.
43. [F] It is generally the case that there is no "natural" connection between a linguistic form and its meaning. You cannot look at the English word *dog* and determine from its shape that it has a natural meaning. The linguistic form has no natural or "ironic" relationships with that four-legged barking object out in the world.
44. [F] It should be descriptive linguistics.
29. [T] 30. [T] 31. [T] 35. [T] 37. [T] 38. [T] 39. [T]
41. [T] 45. [T]

IV. Terms Definition

46. Design features refer to the defining properties of human language that tell the differ-

ence between human language and any other systems of animal communication.

47. Discreteness of language is opposite to continuousness. Each word in a language is composed of individual linguistic unit. For example, in English *bet* is composed of /b/, /e/ and /t/.
48. The recreational function of language refers to the use of language for the sheer joy of using it, such as a baby's banging or a chanter's chanting.
49. Macrolinguistics, as a cover term, refers to sociolinguistics, anthropological linguistics, neurological linguistics, mathematical linguistics and computational linguistics.
50. Parole refers to the actual phenomena or data of linguistics.
51. Competence is an essential part of performance. It is the speaker's knowledge of his or her language; that is, of its sound structure, its words, and its grammatical rules. Competence is, in a way, an encyclopedia of language. Moreover, the knowledge involved in competence is generally unconscious. A transformational-generative grammar is a model of competence.
52. Cultural transmission reads that language is culturally transmitted. That is, it is passed on from one generation to the next by teaching and learning rather than by instinct. This is not to deny that human capacity for language has a generic basis; in fact only human beings can learn a human language at birth and he has been exposed to language in order to acquire it. Humans can speak about the "not here" and the "not there" while animals seem to have only a signaling system.
53. Displacement means that human languages enable their users to symbolize objects, events and concepts, which are not present (in time and space) at the moment of communication.
54. Phatic function of language refers to the social interaction of language.
For example: (Mrs. P sneezes violently.)
Mrs. Q: Bless you.
Mrs. P: Thank you.
- Such small, seemingly meaningless expression to maintain a comfortable relationship is used between people without involving any factual content. The phatic function refers to expressions that help define and maintain interpersonal relations, such as slangs, jokes, jargons, ritualistic exchanges, switches to social and regional dialects.
55. Diachronic linguistics is the study of a language through the course of its history. Therefore, it is also called historical linguistics.
56. To say that linguistics is a descriptive science is to say that the linguist tries to discover and record the rules to which the members of a language community actually conform and does not seek to impose upon them other rules, or norms, of correctness, which are in the scope of prescriptive linguistics.