

LINGUISTICS AND FL
TEACHING

高文艳 李鹏飞◎编著

语言学 与外语

教学



暨南大学出版社
JINAN UNIVERSITY PRESS

高文艳 李鹏飞◎编著

LINGUISTICS AND FL
TEACHING

语言学与外语 教学



暨南大学出版社
JINAN UNIVERSITY PRESS

中国·广州

图书在版编目 (CIP) 数据

语言学与外语教学 = Linguistics and FL Teaching: 英文/高文艳, 李鹏飞编著. —广州: 暨南大学出版社, 2012. 2

ISBN 978 - 7 - 81135 - 260 - 3

I. ①语… II. ①高… ②李… III. ①语言学—研究—英文 ②英语—教学研究—英文
IV. ①H0 ②H319.3

中国版本图书馆 CIP 数据核字 (2011) 第 234639 号

出版发行: 暨南大学出版社

地 址: 中国广州暨南大学

电 话: 总编室 (8620) 85221601

营销部 (8620) 85225284 85228291 85228292 (邮购)

传 真: (8620) 85221583 (办公室) 85223774 (营销部)

邮 编: 510630

网 址: <http://www.jnupress.com> <http://press.jnu.edu.cn>

排 版: 广州市天河星辰文化发展部照排中心

印 刷: 佛山市浩文彩色印刷有限公司

开 本: 787mm × 1092mm 1/16

印 张: 19

字 数: 495 千

版 次: 2012 年 2 月第 1 版

印 次: 2012 年 2 月第 1 次

印 数: 1—3000 册

定 价: 39.80 元

(暨大版图书如有印装质量问题, 请与出版社总编室联系调换)

Introduction to the Course Book

Linguistics and FL Teaching

Linguistics and FL Teaching is a book written by Gao Wenyan and Li Pengfei in Beijing Institute of Technology. The book intends to integrate the three main parts of modern linguistics, the general linguistics, the applied linguistics and foreign language teaching (or the second language teaching) into an organic whole to focus on the practical purpose and essential objectives of modern linguistic science. That is to say, for the most English majors or other foreign language majors, the eventual goals of their study of linguistics are to put what they learn from the linguistic science into their professional businesses or duties. However, most existing course books of linguistics tend to be chiefly theory-oriented, beginning with the stressed discussion on the linguistic basics in a detailed way and ending up with the general introduction to its related areas, such as the relation among language, culture and society, or a general discussion on language use in literature, social sciences and humanities. Therefore, starting from the actual professional needs or future career areas likely to be engaged in, we prefer to prepare a book of linguistics in a more practical and down-to-earth way to suit their actual needs, though the readers of this book may see that this book is basically expected to satisfy their needs for the linguistics ABC and the general developmental trends in our information age. Readers of this book will also find that we have put more thoughts on discussion of the related branches of applied linguistics, e. g. practical pragmatics, psycholinguistics, machine language, interlanguage and language of cognition. And, finally, the book has dedicated its three chapters to the theoretical and practical problems on the foreign language teaching or FL language pedagogy. For the readers' greater benefits, what we want to pursue is to give them a reliable open-minded problem-solving orientation for their further study and work. It is for the above said reasons that we have been trying to make our discussion on each part in a practical and concise manner by providing necessary theoretical discussions, followed by available examples to clarify the topics concerned. And at the end of each chapter, we have prepared enough highly related exercises, so as for the learners to gain the essential knowledge and skills of actual language in use.

Though teaching general linguistics for years, we are new-comers in writing such linguistics books. As a close friend of Professor Liu Runqing and Professor Wang Fengxin, I have learned a great deal from their research work and their books. Therefore, I often tell to my students, they are my guides in academic matters. While compiling the given book, we have to show our acknowledgement to Professor Liu for the enlightenment of his book *Linguistics: A New Coursebook*,

which I have used for a number of years in my teaching job. The other two books we have to show our great debts to are *General Linguistics (An Introductory Survey)* by R. H. Robins and *Applied Linguistics and the Learning and Teaching of Foreign Languages* by Theo Van Els et al. Though the two books have been published for a number of years, their ideas remain fresh and highly instructive to the reform of our current FL teaching and learning. The main texts of this book are compiled by Li Pengfei and Gao Wenyan. We have asked Mr. Zeng Xun, Mr. Yan Hongci and Miss Zhou Qi to prepare the exercises for most chapters, to whom we have also to show our deep gratitude.

Li Pengfei
Jan. 10, 2012

Contents

Introduction to the Course Book <i>Linguistics and FL Teaching</i>	1
---	---

Part I General Linguistics

Chapter 1 Invitations to Linguistics	1
1.1 What Is Linguistics	1
1.2 Functions of Language	8
Chapter 2 Phonology and Phonetics	11
2.1 What Is Phonetics	11
2.2 The Phonic Medium of Language	12
2.3 Organs of Speech or Articulators	12
2.4 Phonetic Transcription	16
2.5 Classification of English Speech Sounds	21
2.6 Variations of Sounds	23
2.7 Phonology	24
Chapter 3 Morphology	33
3.1 What Is Morphology	33
3.2 Morpheme and Morphology	34
3.3 Morphemes, Inflection and Derivation	35
3.4 The Semantic Status of Morphemes	44
Chapter 4 Syntax	47
4.1 What Is Syntax	47
4.2 Syntactic Relations	47
4.3 Word Classes	49
4.4 Constituent Structure Grammar	51
4.5 Transformational-generative Grammar (TG Grammar)	54
4.6 Systemic Functional Grammar	61
Chapter 5 Semantics	69
5.1 What Is Semantics	69
5.2 Some Views Concerning the Study of Meaning	69

5.3	Lexical Meaning	73
5.4	Semantic Relationships Between Words	83
5.5	Sentence Meaning	87
Chapter 6	Pragmatics	96
6.1	What Is Pragmatics	96
6.2	Introduction to John L. Austin and His Speech Act Theory	99
6.3	Characteristics of Implicatures	111
6.4	Contemporary Pragmatic Theory	115
Part II Applied Linguistics		
Chapter 7	Introduction to Applied Linguistics	124
7.1	What Is Applied Linguistics	124
7.2	The Relation of Applied Linguistics and Language Teaching and Learning	126
7.3	Language Behaviour and Language Learning	128
7.4	Language Learning	137
7.5	Second Language Acquisition or Second Language Learning	141
7.6	The Recent Advances in the Theory of Second Language Acquisition	145
Chapter 8	Psycholinguistics and SL Acquisition	154
8.1	What Is Psycholinguistics	154
8.2	Psycholinguistics and Second or Foreign Language Acquisition	155
8.3	Concept of Linguistic and Communicative Competence	159
8.4	Analyzability and Accessibility: The Way for the Language Users and Learners to Operate Strategic Competence	161
8.5	The Role of Memory in Language Use	162
8.6	A New Deeper Understanding of the Relation Between Competence and Performance	164
8.7	Language Information-processing System and the Demands on Attention from the Language Users	165
8.8	The Use of Learner's Language Processing Ability to Maximize the Effectiveness	167
Chapter 9	Computational Linguistics and Machine Translation	171
9.1	The Definition of Computational Linguistics	171
9.2	Machine Translation	174
9.3	Mail and News via the Internet	180
Chapter 10	Interlanguage Variations and Situational Context	184
10.1	What Is Interlanguage	184

10.2	Research Methods for Interlanguage	186
10.3	Research Findings of Tarone and Liu from Their Case Study of Bob	195
10.4	A Case Study of Bob's Interlanguage	197
10.5	Tarone and Liu's Critique of Krashen Hypothesis on Natural Order	207
10.6	Deductions of Tarone and Liu from the Case Study	208
10.7	The Recommendations of Liu's Study for Future IL Researchers	210

Part III Linguistics and FL Teaching

Chapter 11	Methods for FL Teaching	214
11.1	Introduction to Language Education and Its Relation to Linguistics	214
11.2	A Survey of the Main Schools of Methodology of Teaching Foreign Languages ...	216
11.3	Linguistics and Language Teaching	218
11.4	Error Analysis (EA)	230
Chapter 12	Linguistics and Art for Classroom Teaching Management	241
12.1	Analysis of the Learners' Need	241
12.2	Krashen's Hypotheses on EFL Classroom Teaching and How to Apply Them in Practice	243
12.3	Research Focus on Learning Strategy Instruction to Promote EFL Teaching Proficiency	244
12.4	The Chief Constituent Components for a Regular EFL Class	246
12.5	Ways for Effective Preparation of an EFL Class	248
12.6	A Sample of a Class Teaching Model in Senior High Class	258
Chapter 13	Testing Methods and FL Teaching Assessment	263
13.1	Linguistics and Language Testing	263
13.2	A Brief Review of the Language Testing History	263
13.3	The Main Types of Language Tests	264
13.4	Rethinking of the Working Principles of Language Testing	266
13.5	Self/Peer-assessment	269
13.6	A Brief List of Terminology on Modern Testing	271

Appendices

Appendix 1	Glossary	278
Appendix 2	Index	288

Part I General Linguistics

Chapter 1 Invitations to Linguistics

1.1 What Is Linguistics

1.1.1 Definition

Linguistics can generally be defined as the scientific study of language. It has to answer such basic questions as “What is language?” “How does language work?” “What is the origin of language?” “Do all the languages have the same origin or their own respective origins?” “What are the functions of the language?” and “How do people use the language to communicate with each other?” “Are there anything in common among all the languages of human beings?” “Can people communicate with each other by using different languages?” or “How does a child acquire his or her mother tongue and how do the learners learn their second or third language in a kindergarten, at the junior or senior school”, and still many other questions. Thus, perhaps, we can say, linguistics, like many other subjects or courses at school or at college, has to do at least two things: Ask questions and then answer the questions it has put forward.

So, as a science or a discipline of science, linguistics now has to deal with a set of established theories, methods and sub-branches to answer the above questions. Here, let us quote what the fathers of modern linguistics say about it.

- A sign is the basic unit of language (a given language at a given time). Every language is a complete system of signs. Parole (the speech of an individual) is an external manifestation of language. (Ferdinand de Saussure)

- A linguistic system is a series of differences of sounds combined with a series of differences of ideas. (Ferdinand de Saussure)

- The connection between the signifier and the signified is arbitrary. (Ferdinand de Saussure)

- Any act of verbal communication is composed of six elements, or factors (the terms of the model): ① a context (the co-text, that is, the other verbal signs in the same message, and the world in which the message takes place), ② an addresser (a sender, or enunciator), ③ an addressee (a receiver, or enunciatee), ④ a contact between an addresser and addressee, ⑤ a common code, ⑥ a message. (Roman Jakobson)

- In many ways, modern linguistics is one of the most remarkable and successful scientific

innovations of the 20th century. The rise of generative grammar in the fifties and sixties produced an atmosphere of intellectual excitement that seemed to be reserved for fundamental developments in the natural sciences. And the excitement was not restricted to linguistics as such, it stretched out to other disciplines, such as philosophy, the emerging disciplines of computer science and cognitive psychology, anthropology and literary studies. And to the present day modern linguistics is held up as a model of scientific innovation to other disciplines in the humanities. (Martin Stokhof)

1.1.2 Ferdinand de Saussure and Modern Linguistics

Saussure's most influential work, *Course in General Linguistics* (*Cours de linguistique générale*), was published posthumously in 1916 by former students Charles Bally and Albert Sechehaye on the basis of notes taken from Saussure's lectures in Geneva. *Course in General Linguistics* became one of the seminal linguistics works of the 20th century, not primarily for the content (many of the ideas had been anticipated in the works of other 20th century linguists), but rather for the innovative approach that Saussure applied in discussing linguistic phenomena.

Its central notion is that language may be analyzed as a formal system of differential elements, apart from the messy dialectics of real-time production and comprehension. Examples of these elements include his notion of the linguistic sign, which is composed of the signifier and the signified. Though the sign may also have a referent, Saussure took this last question to lie beyond the linguist's purview.

Saussure attempted at various times in the 1880s and 1890s to write a book on general linguistic matters. Some of his manuscripts, including an unfinished essay discovered in 1996, were published in *Writings in General Linguistics*, though most of the material in this book had already been published in Engler's critical edition of the Course in 1967 and 1974. (TUFA)

Saussure's ideas had a major impact on the development of linguistic theory in the first half of the 20th century. Two currents of thought emerged independently of each other, one in Europe, the other in America. The results of each incorporated the basic notions of Saussurean thought in forming the central tenets of structural linguistics.

Saussure posited that linguistic form is arbitrary, and therefore all languages function in a similar fashion. According to Saussure, a language is arbitrary because it is systematic in that the whole is greater than the sum of its parts. Also, all languages have their own concepts and sound images (or signifieds and signifiers). Therefore, Saussure argues, languages have a relational conception of their elements: words and their meanings are defined by comparing and contrasting their meanings to one another. For instance, the sound images for and the conception of a book differ from the sound images for and the conception of a table. Languages are also arbitrary because of the nature of their linguistic elements: they are defined in terms of their function rather than in terms of their inherent qualities. Finally, he posits, language has a social nature in that it provides a larger context for analysis, determination, and realization of its structure.

In Europe, the most important work in this period of influence was done by the Prague School. Most notably, Nikolay Trubetzkoy and Roman Jakobson headed the efforts of the Prague

School in setting the course of phonological theory in the decades following 1940. Jakobson's universalizing structural-functional theory of phonology, based on a markedness hierarchy of distinctive features, was the first successful solution of a plane of linguistic analysis according to the Saussurean hypotheses. Elsewhere, Louis Hjelmslev and the Copenhagen School proposed new interpretations of linguistics from structuralist theoretical frameworks.

In America, Saussure's ideas informed the distributionalism of Leonard Bloomfield and the post-Bloomfieldian structuralism of such scholars as Eugene Nida, Bernard Bloch, George L. Trager, Rulon S. Wells III, Charles Hockett, and through Zellig Harris and the young Noam Chomsky. In addition to Chomsky's theory of Transformational Grammar, other contemporary developments of structuralism included Kenneth Pike's theory of tagmemics, Sidney Lamb's theory of stratificational grammar, and Michael Silverstein's work on the language structure and linguistic ideology.

1.1.3 Linguistics as a Science and a Guide to the Language in Use

Science has been used in the definition of general linguistics, which can be understood in two ways. On the one hand, when we say linguistics is a science, it refers to the fact that it is a systematic body of facts and theory is built up around it. On the other hand, or more strictly speaking, it deals with a specific body of materials spoken and written language and that it proceeds by operations that can be publicly communicated and described, and justified by reference to statable principles and to a theory capable of formulation. Here, as R. H. Robins said, its operations and statements should be guided by three canons of science:

- ①Exhaustiveness, the adequate treatment of all the relevant material;
- ②Consistency, the absence of contradiction between different parts of the total statement and within the limits imposed by the two preceding principles;
- ③Economy, whereby, other things being equal, a shorter statement or analysis employing fewer terms is to be preferred to one that is longer or more involved. This is sometimes referred to as the "capturing of generalizations".

Linguistic science and the scientific study of language, however, occupy a very special place among the sciences, in that the linguist is simultaneously the observer of Language and of Languages and the producer and evaluator of at least one language, his own mother tongue. This means that the linguist is free to adopt either the position of the "external" observer of data, supplied by himself or by others in speech or writing, or the position of all internal analyst of what is involved in being a speaker-hearer. Different from other sciences, it cannot be analyzed physiologically and quantitatively or qualitatively through laboratory experiments. It is just from such sorts of reasons that linguistics has tended to favor one standpoint over the other at different times, or even at the same time among contemporaries. This may be likened to the long-standing arguments between the wave-theory of Huygens and the particle theory of Isaac Newton, both of which remain worthy of further studies. In addition, linguistics differs from other studies in that it both uses language and has language as its subject-matter, for which it may well come to take its favorable place in the studies occupied in the higher education.

The great advances made in modern linguistics make us believe that as a science, it has two main purposes. One is to study the nature of language and tries to disclose its inherent regularities and establish theories of its characteristics and ways for its acquisition and learning more effectively. The other is to seek and promote the effective practical applications of language in human life and modern science and production practice. As is shown in the progress of computer technology and artificial engineering, linguistics and its sub-branches, such as applied linguistics, socio-psycholinguistics, have already become a powerful instrument in advancing human civilization. It can be found that in many walks of life, the greater one's understanding of language in general, the better one may expect to be able to set about the task of teaching foreign languages. This covers both the actual techniques of teaching and the textbook compilation in that their aim is to impart particular skills in speaking and understanding and in reading and writing. The communications engineer is nowadays helped by some knowledge of the basic composition of the language signals whose transmission and reception are his responsibility. In another sphere of activity linguistic knowledge is a powerful aid in the remedial treatments known as speech therapy for patients whose speech mechanisms, through injury or defect, are damaged or imperfect. The applications of linguistics to other activities serving particular purposes in the world are collectively known as applied linguistics which we'll discuss in latter chapters.

1. 1. 4 The Scope of Linguistics

Linguistics, the study of language, should include at least five constituent parts: namely, phonological, morphologic, syntactic, semantic and pragmatic. They correspond to phonetics, morphology, syntax, semantics and pragmatics respectively.

Phonetics studies speech sounds, including the production of speech, that is, the ways of how speech sounds are actually made, transmitted and received, the sounds of speech, the description and classification of speech sounds, words and connected speech, etc.

Morphology takes as its goal to study the rules governing the structure, distribution, and sequencing of speech sounds and the shape of syllables. It deals with the sound system of a language by treating phoneme as its starting point. A phoneme is the smallest linguistic unit of sound that can signal a difference in meaning. As is known, English has approximately forty-five phonemes, which have their particularly distinctive values. For example, when we pronounce the two words *peak* and *speak*, *pin* and *spin*, it would be easy for us to perceive the difference of the sound [p] in the former and latter cases. In the words *peak* and *pin*, the sound [p] is pronounced with a strong puff of air stream, whereas in the words *speak* and *spin*, the sound [p] is pronounced with a slighter puff of air. Such a difference in pronunciation is known as aspirated [p^h] and unaspirated [p], whose relation corresponds to that between clear [l] and unclear [ɫ]. Though there is a slight difference in the way they are pronounced, but such a difference does not give rise to difference in meaning. Such different phones which can represent a phoneme in different phonetic environments are called allophones of the phoneme, and which serves just a subject to be studied in phonology.

The sounds used in linguistic communication are represented by symbols, i. e. morphemes.

The study of the way in which the symbols are arranged and combined to form words constitutes the branch of study known as **morphology**. Therefore, morphology is said to be concerned with the internal organization of words. It studies the minimal units of meaning-morphemes and word formation process.

Syntax is about the principles of forming and understanding correct English sentences. The form or structure of a sentence is governed by the rules of syntax. The most important and influential syntactic theory is generative syntax led by Noam Chomsky. Chomsky's system of transformational generative grammar, though it was developed on the basis of his work with Harris, differs from Harris's in a number of respects. It is Chomsky's system that has attracted the most attention and has received the most extensive exemplification and further development. The existence of linguistic universals in syntax, which is the core of Chomsky's claim, is still highly disputed.

Yet, however important the syntax, the study of sentence structure may be, the ultimate goals of language is not just to create grammatically well-formed sentences. In most general terms the use of language is to convey meaning. The study of meaning is nothing else but semantics.

Semantics examines how meaning is encoded in a language. It is not only concerned with meanings of words as lexical items, but also with levels of language below the word and above it, e. g. meaning of morphemes and sentences. The approaches to semantics include formal semantics or truth condition semantics, conceptual semantics and cognitive semantics.

Pragmatics is the study of meaning in context. It deals with particular utterances in particular situations and is especially concerned with the various ways in which the many social contexts of language performance can influence interpretation. The semantics-pragmatics distinction has long been methodologically important in both linguistic and philosophy, hence the linguistic and philosophical backgrounds. However, generally speaking, **semantics** concentrates on meaning that comes purely linguistic knowledge, while **pragmatics** concentrates on those aspects of meaning that cannot be predicted by linguistic knowledge alone and takes into account knowledge about the physical and social world.

What has been discussed above so far is the main branches inside the linguistics, or the core of modern linguistics. However, language can also be discussed in relation to something else outside itself. For example, if we study language in relation to psychology, we would get a new branch of **psycholinguistics**. And in turn, if we study language from the point of view of society, we would get **sociolinguistics**. Cognitive linguistics is an approach to the analysis of natural language that usually focuses on language as in instrument for organizing, processing and conveying information, which is therefore closely related to language acquisition and language learning. To be brief, we would like to cut short our discussion here.

1.1.5 Some Important Distinctions of Linguistics

1.1.5.1 Language Is Specific for Human Beings

Language is a means of verbal communication. It is instrumental in that communicating by speaking or writing is a purposeful act. Modern linguists have proposed various definitions of

language, some of which are quoted below.

“From now on I will consider language to be a set (finite or infinite) of sentences, each finite in length and constructed out of a finite set of elements.” (Chomsky, 1957)

“The distinction between “language” and “a language”: **Language** in the abstract sense is our faculty to talk to each other which all human beings hold in common. **A language** is a particular code, a particular set of conventions which we operate through the possession of the faculty of speech, and a language is not held in common by all beings but by those who belong to the specific speech community.” (Randolph Quirk)

“Techniques, of course, must vary with the teacher and the teaching situation and will always be to some extent a personal matter. Nevertheless, an understanding of the fundamental assumptions relating to the nature of language and language teaching should help a teacher in planning the lesson best suited to a given situation. This article will suggest such five assumptions: ①Language is speech... ②Language is a skill... ③language is patterned... ④Language is complex... ⑤Every language is unique...” (D. H. Howe)

Each of the above definitions has its own special emphasis, and is not totally free from limitations. To give the most accurate definition, language is a system of arbitrary vocal symbols by means of which members of a speech community communicate, interact, and transmit their cultures. And language distinguishes us from animals because it is far more sophisticated than any animal communication system.

1. 1. 5. 2 Design Feature

The features that define our human languages can be called **Design Features**, for design features refer to the defining properties of human language that distinguish it from any animal system of communication.

By comparing language with animal communication systems, we can have a better understanding of the nature of language. A framework was proposed by the American linguist Charles Hockett. He specified twelve design features, six of which are discussed here.

(1) The Arbitrary Feature.

The first is **arbitrariness**. Language is arbitrary. This means that there is no logical connection between meanings and sounds. A good example is the fact that different sounds are used to refer to the same object in different languages. In English, there are different names for the vehicles engaged in land transportation, such as *carts*, *cars*, *motor trucks*, *horse carriages*, *trains*, but in Chinese, all the names of such transportation means are just a subclass of *che* (vehicle), for example, *shoutuiche*, *mache*, *qiche*, *huoche*, and so on. On the other hand, we should be aware that while language is arbitrary by nature, it is not entire arbitrary; certain words are motivated. The best examples are the onomatopoeic words, hence onomatopoeic motivation. There are also morphological motivation and semantic motivation, hence metaphor and metonymy.

(2) The Duality Feature.

The second is **duality**. Language is a system, which consists of two sets of structures, or two levels. At the lower or the basic level there is a structure of sounds, which are meaningless by themselves. But the sounds of language can be grouped and regrouped into a large number of units

of meaning, which are found at the higher level of the system. For example, the grouping of the three sounds [k], [ɑ:] and [p] can mean either a kind of fish (carp), or a public place for rest and amusement (park). Then the units at the higher level can be arranged and rearranged into an infinite number of sentences. This duality of structure or double articulation of language enables its users to talk about anything within their knowledge. No animal communication system has duality or even comes near to possessing it.

(3) The Creativity of Language.

The third is **creativity**. By creativity we mean language is resourceful because of its duality and its recursiveness. Language is productive or creative in that it makes possible the construction and interpretation of new signals by its users. This is why they can produce and understand an infinitely large number of sentences, including sentences they have never heard before. They can send messages which no one else has ever sent before. Much of what we say and hear we are saying or hearing for the first time.

Creativity is unique to human language. Most animal communication systems appear to be highly restricted with respect to the number of different signals that their users can send and receive.

(4) The Displacement Feature.

The fourth is **displacement**. It means that human languages enable their users to symbolize objects, events and concepts which are not present at the moment of communication. In other words, language can be used to refer to contexts removed from the immediate situations of the speaker. This is what "displacement" means. This property provides speakers with an opportunity to talk about a wide range of things, free from barriers caused by separation in time and place. In contrast, no animal communication system possesses this feature. Animal calls are mainly uttered in response to immediate changes of situation, i. e. in contact of food, in presence of danger or in pain. Once the danger or pain has gone, calls stop.

(5) Cultural Transmission.

The fifth is **cultural transmission**. While human capacity for language has a genetic basis, i. e. we were all born with the ability to acquire languages, the details of any language system are not genetically transmitted, but instead, have to be taught and learned. An English speaker and a Chinese speaker are both able to use a language, but they are not mutually intelligible. This shows that language is culturally transmitted. It is passed on from one generation to the next through teaching and learning, rather than by instinct. In contrast, animal call systems are genetically transmitted.

(6) The Prescriptive and Descriptive Features.

The sixth is **prescriptive and descriptive**. They represent two different types of linguistic study. If a linguistic study aims to describe and analyze the language people actually use, it is said to be descriptive; if the linguistic study aims to lay down rules for "correct and standard" behaviour in using language, i. e. to tell people what they should say and what they should not say, it is said to be prescriptive.

Language exists in time and changes through time. The description of a language at some point of time in history is a synchronic study; the description of a language as it changes through

time is a diachronic study. A diachronic study of language is a historical study; it studies the historical development of language over a period of time.

The distinction between *langue* and *parole* was made by the Swiss linguist Ferdinand de Saussure in the early 20th century. *Langue* and *parole* are French words; *Langue* refers to the abstract linguistic system shared by all the members of a speech community, and *parole* refers to the realization of *langue* in actual use. **Langue** is the set of conventions and rules which language users all have to abide by, and **parole** is the concrete use of the conventions and the application of the rules.

Similar to Saussure's distinction between *langue* and *parole* is the distinction between **competence** and **performance**, which was proposed by the American linguist Noam Chomsky in the late 1950s. Chomsky defines competence as the ideal user's knowledge of the rules of his language, and performance the actual realization of this knowledge in linguistic communication.

1.2 Functions of Language

In his earlier works, Halliday proposed seven categories of language function by observing language development. Still other classifications employ different categories and use different terms, but all share a lot in common about the basic functions of language. We list the summary below for the convenience of presentation.

The first is **informative** function. Language is the instrument of thought and people often feel need to speak their thoughts aloud, for instance, when they are working on a math problem. The second is **interpersonal** function, that is to establish and maintain status in a society. The third is **performative** function, i. e. to change social status of a person, to do things. The fourth is **emotive** function, i. e. to change the emotional status of an audience for/against something or somebody. The fifth is **phatic** function, i. e. seemingly meaningless expressions used to maintain good personal relations. The sixth is **recreational** function, i. e. the use of language for the sheer joy of it.

References and Suggestions for Further Readings:

David, Crystal. 1992. *The Cambridge Encyclopedia of Language*. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press.

Robins, R. H. 1989. *General Linguistics*. Beijing: Foreign Language Teaching and Research Press.

Saussure, F. 1966. *Course in General Linguistics*. New York: McGraw-Hill.

Sampson, G. 1980. *Schools of Linguistics*. Stanford: Stanford University Press.

Widdowson, H. G. 1996. *Linguistics*. Oxford: Oxford University Press.

刘润清. 西方语言学流派. 北京: 外语教学与研究出版社, 1995.

张连文. 原则与参数系统的科学论述——《当代句法学导论》评介. 现代外语, 2005a (1).

张连文. 句法研究的新发展——《最简句法：探索英语的结构》评介. 外国语, 2005b (4).

Revision Exercises

I. Define the Following Terms

1. semantics
2. displacement
3. langue
4. duality
5. pragmatics
6. cultural transmission

II. Multiple Choice

Directions: In each question there are four choices. Decide which one would be the best answer to the question or to complete the sentence best.

1. Which of the following is the most important function of language?
 - A. Interpersonal function.
 - B. Performative function.
 - C. Informative function.
 - D. Recreational function.
2. By _____ it means that language can be used to refer to things which are present or not present, real or imagined, matters in the past, present, or future, or in far-away places.
 - A. arbitrariness
 - B. duality
 - C. creativity
 - D. displacement
3. _____ function refers to expressions that help define and maintain interpersonal relations.
 - A. Performative
 - B. Interpersonal
 - C. Phatic
 - D. Metalingual
4. _____ studies the rules governing the combination of words into sentences.
 - A. Pragmatics
 - B. Semantics
 - C. Syntax
 - D. Phonetics
5. The study of language as a whole is often called _____.
 - A. synchronic linguistics
 - B. diachronic linguistics
 - C. general linguistics
 - D. macrolinguistics
6. _____ is said to be concerned with the internal organization of words.
 - A. Morphology
 - B. Semantics
 - C. Syntax
 - D. Phonetics
7. _____ is an approach to the analysis of natural language that usually focuses on language as in the instrument for organizing, processing and conveying information, which is therefore closely related to language acquisition and language learning.
 - A. Cognitive linguistics
 - B. Psychological linguistics
 - C. Sociolinguistics
 - D. Neurolinguistics
8. The person who is often described as "father of modern linguistics" is _____.
 - A. Firth
 - B. Saussure
 - C. Halliday
 - D. Chomsky
9. If a linguistic study describes and analyzes the language people actually use, it is said to be _____.