A DICTIONARY OF
LINGUISTICS
AND PHONETICS

SIXTH EDITION

DAVID CRYSTAL

A Dictionary of Linguistics
and Phonetics

Sixth Edition

David Crystal

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A Dictionary of Linguistics and Phonetics

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Preface to
the Sixth Edition

When I took the first survey of my undertaking, I found our speech copious without order, and energetick without rules: wherever I turned my view, there was perplexity to be disentangled, and confusion to be regulated; choice was to be made out of boundless variety, without any established principle of selection; adulterations were to be detected, without a settled test of purity; and modes of expression to be rejected or received, without the suffrages of any writers of classical reputation or acknowledged authority.

Samuel Johnson, 'Preface' to *A Dictionary of the English Language*

One sign of immaturity [in a science] is the endless flow of terminology. The critical reader begins to wonder if some strange naming taboo attaches to the terms that a linguist uses, whereby when he dies they must be buried with him.

Dwight Bolinger, *Aspects of Language*, p. 554

It is over twenty-five years since the first edition of this book, and the plaint with which I began the preface to that edition remains as valid as ever. What is needed, I said then, is a comprehensive lexicographical survey, on historical principles, of twentieth-century terminology in linguistics and phonetics. And I continued, in that and the subsequent four prefaces, in the following way.

We could use the techniques, well established, which have provided dictionaries of excellence, such as the *Oxford English Dictionary*. The painstaking scrutiny of texts from a range of contexts, the recording of new words and senses on slips, and the systematic correlation of these as a preliminary to representing patterns of usage: such steps are routine for major surveys of general vocabulary and could as readily be applied for a specialized vocabulary, such as the present undertaking. Needless to say, it would be a massive task – and one which, for linguistics and phonetics, has frequently been initiated, though without much progress. I am aware of several attempts to work along these lines, in Canada, Great Britain, Japan and the United States, sometimes by individuals, sometimes by committees. All seem to have foundered, presumably for a mixture of organizational and financial reasons. I tried to initiate such a project myself, twice, but failed both times, for the same reasons. The need for a proper linguistics

dictionary is thus as urgent now as it ever was; but to be fulfilled it requires a combination of academic expertise, time, physical resources and finance which so far have proved impossible to attain.

But how to cope, in the meantime, with the apparently 'endless flow of terminology' which Bolinger, among many others, laments? And how to deal with the enquiries from the *two* kinds of consumer of linguistic and phonetic terms? For this surely is the peculiar difficulty which linguists have always had to face – that their subject, despite its relative immaturity, carries immense popular as well as academic appeal. Not only, therefore, is terminology a problem for the academic linguist and phonetician; these days, such people are far outnumbered by those who, for private or professional reasons, have developed more than an incidental interest in the subject. It is of little use intimating that the interest of the outside world is premature, as has sometimes been suggested. The interest exists, in a genuine, responsible and critical form, and requires a comparably responsible academic reaction. The present dictionary is, in the first instance, an attempt to meet that popular demand for information about linguistic terms, pending the fuller, academic evaluation of the subject's terminology which one day may come.

The demand has come mainly from those for whom a conscious awareness of language is an integral part of the exercise of a profession, and upon whom the influence of linguistics has been making itself increasingly felt in recent years. This characterization includes two main groups: the range of teaching and remedial language professions, such as foreign-language teaching or speech and language therapy; and the range of academic fields which study language as part of their concerns, such as psychology, anthropology, sociology, literary criticism and philosophy. It also includes an increasing number of students of linguistics – especially those who are taking introductory courses in the subject at postgraduate or in-service levels. In addition, there are the many categories of first-year undergraduate students of linguistics and phonetics, and (especially since the early 1990s) a corresponding growth in the numbers studying the subject abroad. My aim, accordingly, is to provide a tool which will assist these groups in their initial coming to grips with linguistic terminology, and it is this which motivated the original title of the book in 1980: *A First Dictionary of Linguistics and Phonetics*. The publisher dropped the word *First* from later editions, on the grounds that it had little force, given that there was no 'advanced' dictionary for students to move on to; but, though my book has doubled in size during the intervening period, it still seems as far away from a comprehensive account as it did at the outset. Bolinger's comment still very much obtains.

Coverage

Once a decision about readership had been made, the problem of selecting items and senses for inclusion simplified considerably. It is not the case that the whole of linguistic terminology, and all schools of thought, have proved equally attractive or useful to the above groups. Some terms have been used (and abused) far more than others. For example, COMPETENCE, LEXIS, GENERATE, STRUCTURALISM, MORPHOLOGY and PROSODY are a handful which turn up so often in a student's early experience of the subject that their exclusion would have been unthinkable.

The terminology of phonetics, also, is so pervasive that it is a priority for special attention. On the other hand, there are many highly specialized terms which are unlikely to cause any problems for my intended readership, as they will not encounter them in their initial contact with linguistic ideas. The detailed terminology of, say, glossematics or stratificational grammar has not made much of an impact on the general consciousness of the above groups. While I have included several of the more important theoretical terms from these less widely encountered approaches, therefore, I have not presented their terminology in any detail. Likewise, some linguistic theories and descriptions have achieved far greater popularity than others – generative grammar, in all its incarnations, most obviously, and (in Great Britain) Hallidayan linguistics and the Quirk reference grammar, for example.

The biases of this dictionary, I hope, will be seen to be those already present in the applied and introductory literature – with a certain amount of systematization and filling-out in places, to avoid gaps in the presentation of a topic; for example, whereas many introductory texts selectively illustrate DISTINCTIVE FEATURES, this topic has been systematically covered in the present book. I devote a great deal of space to the many 'harmless-looking' terms which are used by linguists, where an apparently everyday word has developed a special sense, often after years of linguistic debate, such as FORM, FUNCTION, FEATURE, ACCENT, WORD and SENTENCE. These are terms which, perhaps on account of their less technical appearance, cause especial difficulty at an introductory level. Particular attention is paid to them in this dictionary, therefore, alongside the more obvious technical terms, such as PHONEME, BILABIAL, ADJUNCTION and HYPONYMY.

Bearing in mind the background of my primary readership has helped to simplify the selection of material for inclusion in a second way: the focus was primarily on those terms and senses which have arisen because of the influence of twentieth-century linguistics and phonetics. This dictionary is therefore in contrast with several others, where the aim seems to have been to cover the whole field of language, languages and communication, as well as linguistics and phonetics. My attitude here is readily summarized: I do not include terms whose sense any good general dictionary would routinely handle, such as *alphabet* and *aphorism*. As terms, they owe nothing to the development of ideas in linguistics. Similarly, while such terms as *runic* and *rhyme-scheme* are more obviously technical, their special ranges of application derive from conceptual frameworks other than linguistics. I have therefore not attempted to take on board the huge terminological apparatus of classical rhetoric and literary criticism (in its focus on language), or the similarly vast terminology of speech and language disorders. Nor have I gone down the encyclopedia road, adding names of people, languages and other 'proper names', apart from in the few cases where schools of thought have developed (CHOMSKYAN, BLOOMFIELDIAN, PRAGUE SCHOOL, etc.). Many of these terms form the subject-matter of my companion volume, *The Penguin Dictionary of Language* (1999), which is the second edition of a work that originally appeared as *An Encyclopedic Dictionary of Language and Languages* (Blackwell/Penguin, 1992).

In the first edition, to keep the focus sharp on the contemporary subject, I was quite rigorous about excluding several types of term, unless they had edged their way into modern linguistics: the terminology of traditional (pre-twentieth-century)

language study, comparative philology, applied language studies (such as language teaching and speech pathology) and related domains such as acoustics, information theory, audiology, logic and philosophy. However, reader feedback over the years has made it clear that a broader coverage is desirable. Although the definition of, say, *bandwidth* properly belongs outside of linguistics and phonetics, the frequency with which students encounter the term in their phonetics reading has motivated its inclusion now. A similar broadening of interest has taken place with reference to psychology (especially speech perception), computing and logic (especially in formal semantics). The first edition had already included the first tranche of terms arising out of the formalization of ideas initiated by Chomsky (such as AXIOM, ALGORITHM, PROPOSITION), the fifth edition greatly increased its coverage in this area, and the sixth has continued this process, with especial reference to the minimalist programme. Recent decades have also brought renewed interest in nineteenth-century philological studies and traditional grammar. The various editions of the book have steadily increased their coverage of these domains, accordingly (though falling well short of a comprehensive account), and this was a particular feature of the fifth edition.

The new edition is now not far short of a quarter of a million words. It contains over 5,100 terms, identified by items in boldface typography, grouped into over 3,000 entries. Several other locutions, derived from these headwords, are identified through the use of inverted commas.

Treatment

I remain doubtful even now whether the most appropriate title for this book is 'dictionary'. The definitional parts of the entries, by themselves, were less illuminating than one might have expected; consequently it proved necessary to introduce in addition a more discursive approach, with several illustrations, to capture the significance of a term. Most entries accordingly contain an element of encyclopedic information, often about such matters as the historical context in which a term was used, or the relationship between a term and others from associated fields. At times, owing to the absence of authoritative studies of terminological development in linguistics, I have had to introduce a personal interpretation in discussing a term; but usually I have obtained my information from standard expositions or (see below) specialists. A number of general reference works were listed as secondary sources for further reading in the early editions of this book, but this convention proved unwieldy to introduce for all entries, as the size of the database grew, and was dropped in the fourth edition.

My focus throughout has been on standard usage. Generative grammar, in particular, is full of idiosyncratic terminology devised by individual scholars to draw attention to particular problems; one could fill a whole dictionary with the hundreds of conditions and constraints that have been proposed over the years, many of which are now only of historical interest. If they attracted a great deal of attention in their day, they have been included; but I have not tried to maintain a historical record of origins, identifying the originators of terms, except in those cases where a whole class of terms had a single point of origin (as in the different distinctive-feature sets). However, an interesting feature of the sixth edition has been a developed historical perspective: many of the entries

originally written for the first edition (1980) have seriously dated over the past 25 years, and I have been struck by the number of cases where I have had to add 'early use', 'in the 1970s', and the like, to avoid giving the impression that the terms have current relevance.

I have tried to make the entries as self-contained as possible, and not relied on obligatory cross-references to other entries to complete the exposition of a sense. I have preferred to work on the principle that, as most dictionary-users open a dictionary with a *single* problematic term in mind, they should be given a satisfactory account of that term as immediately as possible. I therefore explain *competence* under COMPETENCE, *performance* under PERFORMANCE, and so on. As a consequence of the interdependence of these terms, however, this procedure means that there must be some repetition: at least the salient characteristics of the term *performance* must be incorporated into the entry for COMPETENCE, and vice versa. This repetition would be a weakness if the book were read from cover to cover; but a dictionary should not be used as a textbook.

As the book has grown in size, over its various editions, it has proved increasingly essential to identify major lexical variants as separate headwords, rather than leaving them 'buried' within an entry, so that readers can find the location of a term quickly. One of the problems with discursive encyclopedic treatments is that terms can get lost; and a difficulty in tracking terms down, especially within my larger entries, has been a persistent criticism of the book. I have lost count of the number of times someone has written to say that I should include X in the next edition, when X was already there – in a place which seemed a logical location to me, but evidently not to my correspondent. The biggest change between the fifth and earlier editions was to bite this bullet. That edition increased the number of 'X see Y' entries. All 'buried' terminology was extracted from within entries and introduced into the headword list.

Within an entry, the following conventions should be noted:

The main terms being defined are printed in boldface. In the fifth edition, I dropped the convention (which some readers found confusing) of including inflectional variants immediately after the headword; these are now included in bold within an entry, on their first mention.

I also increased the amount of guidance about usage, especially relevant to readers for whom English is not a first language, by adding word-class identifiers for single-word headwords, and incorporating an illustration of usage into the body of an entry: for example, the entry on INESSIVE contains a sentence beginning 'The inessive case ('the inessive') is found in Finnish . . .' – a convention which illustrates that *inessive* can be used adjectivally as well as nominally.

Terms defined elsewhere in this dictionary are printed in SMALL CAPITALS within an entry (disregarding inflectional endings) – but only on their *first* appearance within an entry, and only where their technical status is important for an appreciation of the sense of the entry.

Acknowledgements

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As always, I remain responsible for the use I have made of all this help, and continue to welcome comments from readers willing to draw my attention to areas where further progress might be made.

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David Crystal
Holyhead, 2008

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List of Abbreviations

Term	Gloss	Relevant entry
A	adjective	adjective
A	adverb(ial)	adverb
A	argument	argument
AAVE	African-American Vernacular English	vernacular
abl, ABL	ablative	ablative
abs, ABS	absolutive	absolutive
abstr	abstract	abstract (1)
acc, ACC	accusative	accusative
act, ACT	active	active
adj, ADJ	adjective	adjective
AdjP	adjective phrase	adjective
adv, ADV	adverb	adverb
AdvP	adverb(ial) phrase	adverb
AFF	affix	affix
AGR	agreement	agreement
AgrP	agreement phrase	agreement
AGT	agent(ive)	agentive
all, ALL	allative	allative
aor, AOR	aorist	aorist
AP	adjective phrase	adjective
appl	applicative	applicative
arg	argument	argument
art	article	article
ASL	American Sign Language	sign
asp	aspect	aspect
ASR	automatic speech recognition	speech recognition
ATB	across-the-board	across-the-board
ATN	augmented transition network	transition network grammar
ATR	advanced tongue root	root (2)

Term	Gloss	Relevant entry
augm	augmentative	augmentative
aux, AUX	auxiliary verb	auxiliary
B	base	anchor, base (1)
ben, BEN	benefactive	benefactive
BEV	Black English Vernacular	vernacular
BP	bijection principle	bijection principle
BSL	British Sign Language	sign
BT	baby-talk	child-directed speech
BVE	Black Vernacular English	vernacular
C	complementizer	complementizer
C	consonant	consonant
c	constituent	command (2), c-structure
CA	componential analysis	component
CA	contrastive analysis	contrastive analysis
CA	conversation analysis	conversation analysis
CAP	control agreement principle	control agreement principle
caus, CAUS	causative	causative
CD	communicative dynamism	communicative dynamism
CED	condition on extraction domains	condition on extraction domains
CF	context-free	context
cho	chômeur	chômeur
CL	classifier	classifier (1)
class	classifier	classifier (1)
cn	connective, connector	connective
Co	coda	coda
comp	compact	comp
comp	comparative	comparative
comp	complement	complement
comp, COMP	complementizer	complementizer
con	constraint	constraint
cond	conditional	conditional
conj	conjunction	conjunction
conn	connective, connector	connective
cons	consonantal	consonant
cont	continuant	continuant
coord	co-ordination, co-ordinator	co-ordination
cor, COR	coronal	coronal
CP	complementizer phrase	complementizer
cps	cycles per second	cycle (3)
CS	context-sensitive	context
CV	cardinal vowel	cardinal vowels
CV	consonant–vowel	CV phonology
D	deep	D-structure
D	determiner	determiner
D	diacritic feature	diacritic
DA	discourse analysis	discourse

DAF	delayed auditory feedback	feedback
dat, DAT	dative	dative
dB	decibel	loudness
DDG	daughter-dependency grammar	daughter-dependency grammar
def, DEF	definite	definite
DEL REL	delayed release	delayed
dem, DEM	demonstrative	demonstrative
det, DET	determiner	determiner
DF	distinctive feature	distinctiveness
DICE	discourse in common sense entailment	discourse in common sense entailment
diff, DIFF	diffuse	diffuse
dim, DIM	diminutive	diminutive
dist, DIST	distributive	distributive
DM	distributed morphology	distributed morphology
DO	direct object	direct (1)
DP	dependency phonology	dependency phonology
DP	determiner phrase	determiner
DR	default rule	default
DRS	discourse representation structure	discourse representation theory
DRT	discourse representation theory	discourse representation theory
DS	different subject	switch reference
DTC	derivational theory of complexity	correspondence hypothesis
DTE	designated terminal element	designated terminal element
du	dual	number
dur, DUR	durative	durative
e	empty category	gap
E	externalized	E-language
ECM	exceptional case marking	raising
ECP	empty category principle	empty category principle
-ed	past tense form	-ed form
EGG	electroglottogram, electroglottograph(y)	electroglottograph
elat, ELAT	elative	elative
ELG	electrolaryngogram, electrolaryngograph(y)	electrolaryngograph
EMG	electromyogram, electromyograph(y)	electromyograph
-en	past participle form	-en form
EPG	electropalatogram, electropalatograph(y)	electropalatograph
EPP	extended projection principle	projection
erg, ERG	ergative	ergative
EST	extended standard theory	extended standard theory
EVAL	evaluator component	evaluator

Term	Gloss	Relevant entry
excl	exclusive	exclusive (1)
f	functional	f-structure
f, F	feminine	gender
F	feature	contour (2), edge
F	formant	formant
F_0	fundamental frequency	fundamental frequency
FCR	feature-co-occurrence restriction	feature
fem, FEM	feminine	gender
foc	focus	focus
freq	frequentative	frequentative
FSG	finite-state grammar	finite-state grammar
FSL	finite-state language	finite-state grammar
FSP	functional sentence perspective	functional sentence perspective
Ft	foot	foot (1)
fut, FUT	future	future tense
fv, FV	final vowel	final
GA	General American	General American
GB	government-(and-)binding theory	government-binding theory
GEN	generator component	generator
gen, GEN	genitive	genitive
GF	grammatical function	function (1)
GLOW	Generative Linguists of the Old World	Generative Linguists of the Old World
GP	generative phonology	phonology
GPSG	generalized phrase-structure grammar	generalized phrase-structure grammar
G^2PSG	generalized generalized phrase-structure grammar	generalized phrase-structure grammar
H	head	modification (1)
H	heavy syllable	weight
H	high tone	tone
H	high variety	diglossia
hab	habitual	habitual
HMC	head movement constraint	head movement constraint
HP	head phrase	head
HPSG	head-driven phrase-structure grammar	head-driven phrase-structure grammar
Hz	hertz	cycle (3)
I	inflection	inflection (2)
I	internalized	I-language
IA	item and arrangement	item and arrangement
IC	immediate constituent	constituent
ID	immediate dominance	immediate dominance (2)
IDENT	identity	identity

IE	Indo-European	family
iff	if and only if	logical consequence
imp	imperative	imperative
imp	imperfect	imperfect tense
imper, IMPER	imperative	imperative
imperf	imperfect	imperfect tense
impf, IMPF	imperfect	imperfect tense
inc	incorporation	incorporation
incep, INCEP	inceptive	inceptive
inch, INCH	inchoative	inceptive
incl	inclusive	inclusion (3)
indef	indefinite	indefinite
indic, INDIC	indicative	indicative
inf, INF	infinitive	infinitive
-ing	-ing form of English verb	-ing form
inst, INST	instrumental	instrumental
inter(rog)	interrogative	interrogative
intr(ans)	intransitive	transitivity
IO	indirect object	indirect (1)
IP	inflection phrase	inflection (2)
IP	item and process	item and process
IPA	International Phonetic Alphabet	International Phonetic Association
IPA	International Phonetic Association	International Phonetic Association
irr	irrealis	realis
KAL	knowledge about language	knowledge about language
l	lexical category	l-marking
L	light syllable	weight
L	low tone	tone
L	low variety	diglossia
LAD	language acquisition device	language acquisition device
LF	logical form	logical form
LFG	lexical-functional grammar	lexical-functional grammar
LIPOC	language-independent preferred order of constituents	LIPOC
loc, LOC	locative	locative
LOT	language of thought	mentalese
LP	lexical phonology	lexical phonology
LP	linear precedence	linear precedence rule
LPC	linear prediction coefficient	linear prediction
m	masculine	gender
m	maximal	command (2)
M	modal verb	modal
M	modification	modification (1)
M	morphophonemic (level)	harmonic phonology
M	mot	mot
masc, MASC	masculine	gender