

LANGUAGE STUDY

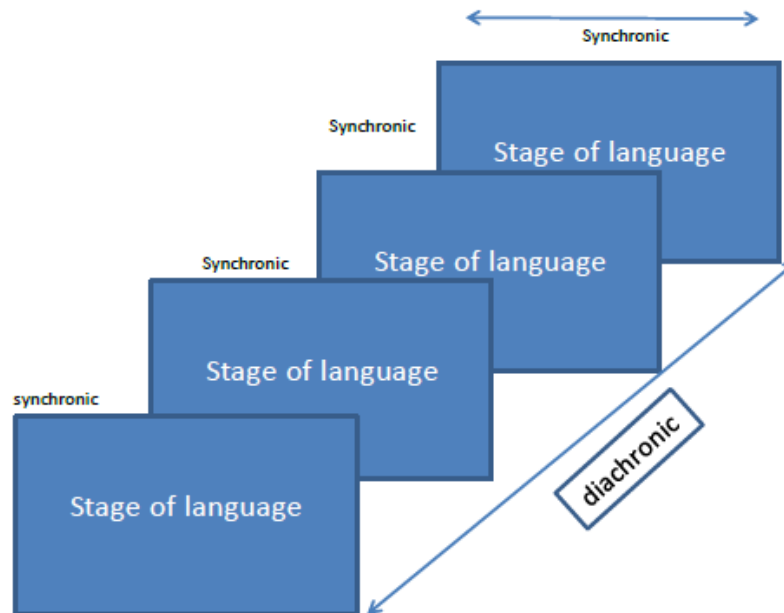
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Scope of Linguistics

- Diachrony and synchrony
- **Diachronic approach** – changes in language in the course of a longer period of time, historical development through individual stages of language
- **Synchronic approach** – language as a static product of its preceding historical development. Development of language at a particular stage

Synchronic vs Diachronic

- Whereas Synchronic study is concerned with the study of language at a particular stage of its development, Diachronic study is concerned with the historical study of language through the individual stages



Descriptive, Historical and Comparative Linguistics

- **Descriptive linguistics** – systemic description of language in a given period. It's a purely synchronic approach
- **Historical linguistics** – language development over a certain time – diachronic
- **Comparative linguistics** – compares two or more languages also with respect to historical relationship. If the historical relationship is not taken into account we speak of Contrastive linguistics

Linguistics as an interdisciplinary subject

- Sociolinguistics
- Psycholinguistics
- Corpus linguistics

The Stages of Linguistic enquiry

- Historical comparative linguistics
 - Structural and descriptive linguistics
 - Transformational and generative linguistics
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- Categories based on approaches that dominated in them

Formal and Functional linguistics

- **Formalists (structuralists)** deal purely with language structure. They reduce the language study to abstract forms and eliminate it from people's actual experience.
- **Functional linguistics** – takes into account communicative function of language, situational context, social factors

Historical Comparative Linguistics

- Genetic Comparison
- Analytic Comparison

Genetic Comparison

- 1786 – William Jones stated that Sanskrit had similar structure to the most European languages
- Linguists tried to restore Proto Indo European Language
- Franz Bopp – founder of Indo-European Comparative Linguistics based on genetic principles - genetic comparison of languages
- August Schleicher – linguistics is an organism based on the same principles as living organisms
- 1870 – Leipzig School – Brugman, Leskien, Verner - Regularity Principle in Language

Regularity means that if a sound changes, it is similarly changed in all the same phonetic surroundings

Analytic Comparison

- Wilhelm Von Humboldt – language is an activity, *energeia*, or an organism which develops spontaneously. He emphasized concrete acts of speech rather than language system.

Structural and Descriptive Linguistics

- 20th Century – linguists emphasized synchronic study of language over diachronic.
- Later developed into Structuralism and gave rise to
 - The Geneva School
 - The Copenhagen School
 - The Prague School

Geneva School

- Ferdinand De Saussure – „Cours De Linguistique“
- Saussure's Contribution:
- Language is a system of interrelated items
- Signifying and Signified
- Langue, Parole, Language
- Language is arbitrary (feature of arbitrariness)
- Linear Character of a sign (syntagma)

The Prague School


- ❑ Established in 1926
- ❑ Functional Approach – how particular units function
- ❑ Communicative needs determine the systemic organization of language
- ❑ Nikolaj S. Trubetzkoy, Roman Jakobson, Wilém Mathesius
- ❑ Wilém Mathesius created the theory of Functional Sentence Perspective and established the categories of functional onomatology and functional syntax
- ❑ Jozef Vachek – student of Wilem Mathesius (compared Czech and English languages)

The Copenhagen School

- Extreme form of structuralism called GLOSEMANTICS
- Representatives: L. Hjelmslev, V. Brondal
- They postulate the idea that language being independent of the substance in which it is manifested can be recognized only within its functions.

Descriptive Linguistics

- Structural linguistics represented by American Descriptivism
- 1930 – 1960
- Like European descriptivism – focus on internal structure of language
- Edward Sapir, Franz Boas
- Split into distributionalism and anthropological linguistics

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- The main distributionalist – Leonard Bloomfield – behaviour is conditioned by the environment we live in. He tried to describe all the positions that units occur in and define their distribution. His work focused on arrangements of items rather than their meaning.

Transformational and Generative Linguistics

- Tried to explain the general principles of language as something independent of any particular language.
- Split into Nativist (mentalist) and Cognitive (psycholinguistic)

Nativist approaches

- Noam Chomsky – book – Syntactic Structures
- Chomsky – theory of Universal Grammar – set of principles inherited genetically
- Chomsky – Communicative Competence, Communicative Performance

Cognitive approaches

- Language and cognition
- Opposed Chomsky's theory – according to Chomsky, language knowledge is separated from other systems of knowledge
- Representatives – R.W. Langacker, G. P. Lakoff – believed that language learning is not essentially distinct from other kinds of learning

Functional Linguistics

- Speech is not formal system, but means of communication and realisation of social acts
- Takes into account semantic and pragmatic aspect
- Communicative approach – (1970's Michael Halliday – FUNCTIONAL GRAMMAR MODEL – language depends on its social functions, closely related to social and personal needs
- Dell Hymes – model of communicative competence – stressing the idea that language is more than an abstract system of rules, it is also the use of rules to communicate – linguistic knowledge + communicative use



Thank You!