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SELF-LEARNING MATERIAL



MA ENGLISH

MEN 202 : LANGUAGE AND LINGUISTICS

w.e.f Academic Session: 2024-25



CENTRE FOR DISTANCE AND ONLINE EDUCATION
UNIVERSITY OF SCIENCE & TECHNOLOGY MEGHALAYA

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Techno City, 9th Mile, Baridua, Ri-Bhoi, Meghalaya, 793101

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Master of Arts in English (MEN)

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UNIVERSITY OF SCIENCE AND TECHNOLOGY MEGHALAYA

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COURSE INFORMATION

This is the second paper of MA English Second Semester. In this paper learners will be able to learn about the introduction to Linguistics. They will also be introduced to semantics and the processes involved in learning a language.

Unit 1 deals with the definition of Linguistics and how the speech mechanism works along with the sounds of the English language. It will help the learners to learn about the history of Linguistics and get an idea of the use of Linguistics in our day to day life.

Unit 2 will make the learners learn about morphemes, its definition, types, its use in grammar. Morphemes are the smallest units of meaning in a language. They are essential for word formation and understanding how words convey meaning.

Unit 3 deals with Sentence Patterns which refers to the typical structure of the different ways words can be arranged to form sentences. These patterns are foundational in English sentence construction and can be expanded or combined to create more complex sentences.

Unit 4 deals with LSRW which stands for listening, speaking, reading and writing-the four essential language skills. Together, these skills form the foundation for effective communication in any language.

Contents

Unit	Particulars	Page numbers
1	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Linguistics: Phonology • Linguistics — Definitions and Assumptions • What and Why of Linguistics? • Speech Mechanism • Cardinal vowel scale • English Vowels, Diphthongs, Consonants • Stress, Intonation, Elision, Assimilation 	6-21
2	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Definition of Morphemes • Classification of Morphemes • Bound Morphemes • Free Morphemes Derivational and Inflectional Morphemes Zero Morphemes Allomorph 	22-29
3	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Sentence Patterns • Analysis 	30-38
4	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Introduction to LSRW • Methods of Language Learning 	39-48

UNIT 1 LINGUISTICS: PHONOLOGY

Unit Structure

- 1.0 Learning Objectives
- 1.1 Introduction to Language
- 1.2 Definitions
- 1.3 Characteristics of Language
- 1.4 Introduction to Linguistics
 - 1.4.1 Phonetics and its branches
- 1.5 Organs of Speech
- 1.6 Speech Mechanisms
- 1.7 IPA chart
 - 1.7.1 Consonants
 - 1.7.2 Vowels
 - 1.7.3 Suprasegmental Features
- 1.8 Cardinal Vowel Scale
- 1.9 Understanding Phonology
 - 1.9.1 Some Concepts of Phonology
- 1.10 Let Us Sum Up
- 1.11 Key Words
- 1.12 Further Readings
- 1.13 Model Questions

1.0 LEARNING OBJECTIVES

After studying this chapter, students will

- Gain an understanding of the essence of 'language'. Despite its elusive nature, exploring its characteristics will enable students to formulate a clearer concept of language.
- encounter diverse perspectives presented by esteemed scholars.
- grasp the significance of linguistics and delve into some fundamental concepts of phonetics and phonology.

1.1 INTRODUCTION TO LANGUAGE

No definitive standard definition has yet comprehensively explained the term

'language'. This mirrors the challenge of defining 'life'—while we all understand what it entails, articulating a precise definition remains elusive. Understanding such terms requires examining the inherent properties and characteristics associated with them. However, various linguists like Jakobson, Bloomfield, Sapir, Chomsky and Saussure, have tried to define language in different ways. Some of these definitions are discussed in the next section.

1.2 DEFINITIONS

1. Robins (1985) defines language as a symbol system based on pure or arbitrary conventions...infinitely extendable and modifiable according to the changing needs and conditions of the speakers (Syal and Jindal, 2007).
2. Sapir (1921) defines language as a purely human and non-instinctive method of communicating ideas, emotions and desires by means of a system of voluntarily produced symbols (Syal and Jindal, 2007).
3. Chomsky (1957) defines language as a set (finite or infinite) of sentences, each finite in length and constructed out of a finite set of elements (Syal and Jindal, 2007).
4. Bloch and Trager (1942) defines language as a system of arbitrary vocal symbols by means of which a social group cooperates (Syal and Jindal, 2007).

1.3 CHARACTERISTICS OF LANGUAGE

There are a number of characteristics through which the term 'language' can be understood in a much better way. Some of these characteristics are discussed below in this section of the unit:

- **Language is a means of communication:** Language is universally recognized as a primary means of communication among humans. It serves as a sophisticated system through which individuals convey thoughts, ideas, emotions, and intentions to others within a community or society. Language enables individuals to express their thoughts and feelings, facilitating self-expression and the sharing of personal experiences. Through language, individuals can convey nuanced emotions, desires, beliefs, and perspectives to others. Language serves as a vehicle for transmitting knowledge, traditions, customs, and cultural heritage across generations. It allows societies to preserve and disseminate their collective wisdom, history, and identity. Language also plays a pivotal role in cognitive development, particularly in childhood. Learning language shapes thought processes, problem-solving abilities and conceptual understanding. It provides the mental framework for organizing and

categorizing knowledge. Language serves as a fundamental tool that enables individuals and societies to communicate effectively, fostering social cohesion, knowledge transmission, and cultural continuity. Its role extends beyond mere information exchange to shaping identities, fostering relationships, and enriching human experiences. As such, understanding language as a means of communication is essential for comprehending human interaction and the complexities of human societies. Language encompasses various modalities beyond spoken words, including gestures, facial expressions, body language, and written symbols. Each modality contributes to the richness and diversity of human communication.

- **Language is primarily vocal:** Language, in its traditional and most common form, is primarily vocal—that is, it is predominantly spoken and heard. This characteristic distinguishes it from other forms of communication, such as written language or non-verbal communication like gestures. Here are several key points that illustrate why language is primarily vocal:
 - Oral Tradition: Throughout history and across cultures, language has been transmitted orally from generation to generation. Oral communication predates written language and remains central to everyday interactions in most societies.
 - Spoken Production: The primary mode of language production involves the articulation of sounds through the vocal apparatus (various speech organs) to create words and sentences. This allows individuals to produce a wide range of phonetic and prosodic features that convey meaning and emotion.
 - Auditory Reception: Language is also predominantly received through auditory channels. Listeners interpret spoken sounds, tones, and intonations to understand the speaker's intended message. This auditory reception involves not only recognizing individual words but also grasping the nuances of pronunciation, stress, rhythm, and pitch that contribute to meaning.
 - Immediate Interaction: Vocal language allows for real-time interaction and feedback between speakers and listeners. Conversations unfold dynamically, with participants adjusting their speech in response to immediate cues and contextual factors. This immediacy fosters spontaneity, clarification, and emotional expression in communication.
- **Language is arbitrary:** The arbitrariness of language is a fundamental concept in linguistics that highlights the lack of inherent connection between linguistic signs (words, gestures, and symbols) and their meanings. This principle, first articulated

by Ferdinand de Saussure, suggests that the relationship between a word and what it represents is not based on any intrinsic qualities of the word itself but is instead established by convention within a particular linguistic community. Linguistic signs, such as words, do not inherently resemble the objects, concepts, or actions they represent. For example, there is nothing inherently "tree-like" about the word "tree" in English or any other language. The connection between the word and its meaning is based on social agreement and convention. The arbitrariness of language is evident in the fact that different languages may use entirely different sounds or symbols to refer to the same concept. For instance, the English word "dog," the French word "chien," and the Japanese word "犬(inu)" all refer to the same animal, yet they sound and look completely different. Even within a single language, the specific sounds (phonemes) that are used to construct words are arbitrary. There is no inherent reason why a particular sequence of sounds should signify a particular concept. For example, the sound combination "d-o-g" [d-ɔ-g] could just as easily have represented a different concept if a different convention had been established.

- **Language is a form of social behaviour:** Language is not merely a tool for communication; it is deeply intertwined with social behavior, playing a crucial role in how individuals interact, form relationships, and participate in the society. Language facilitates social interaction by enabling individuals to engage in conversations, to express opinions, share information, and negotiate meanings with others. Through language, people establish and maintain relationships, cooperate and collaborate within social groups. Language use is governed by social norms and rules that dictate appropriate ways of speaking and interacting in different contexts. These norms include rules of politeness, turn-taking in conversations, and variations in language use based on factors like age, gender, and social status. Language use can also reinforce feelings of belonging or exclusion within society. Language serves as a vehicle for transmitting cultural values, beliefs, traditions, and knowledge from one generation to another. Through language, societies preserve and pass down their collective wisdom, histories, and cultural heritage.
- **Language is productive:** Language is productive in the sense that speakers can create and understand an infinite number of original utterances, even ones that they have never heard or said before. This productivity is a hallmark of human language. Speakers can generate new sentences and expressions effortlessly. They combine words and structures in new ways to convey new meanings or ideas, adapting

language to suit new contexts or to express new concepts. Languages have rules governing how words can be combined into phrases and sentences. These are called syntactic rules, which allow speakers to produce grammatically correct utterances and to recognize and understand the structure of sentences they encounter. Thus, language productivity reflects the dynamic and generative nature of human communication.

1.4 INTRODUCTION TO LINGUISTICS

The term ‘linguistics’ can be referred to the scientific study of languages. Here, the study of languages does not mean studying one language in particular; rather it means studying languages in general. Linguistics does not prioritize achieving proficiency in any particular language. A linguist try to study the ways in which language is organized to fulfil human needs, as a system of communication (Syal and Jindal, 2007). Linguists may know one language, or may have expertise in multiple languages, or even explore languages that have not been studied previously. Thus, we can say that Linguistics focuses on the study of language itself, rather than on the acquisition of any particular language.

1.4.1 PHONETICS AND ITS BRANCHES

Phonetics is a branch of Linguistics that studies language at the level of sounds. The study of Phonetics is categorized into three sub branches:

- **Articulatory Phonetics:** The branch of Phonetics which deals with the production or articulation of speech sounds.
- **Acoustic Phonetics:** The branch of Phonetics that deals with the physical properties of sounds in speech, such as their frequency, amplitude, and duration.
- **Auditory Phonetics:** The branch of Phonetics that deals with how sounds are received or perceived and processed by the human auditory system.

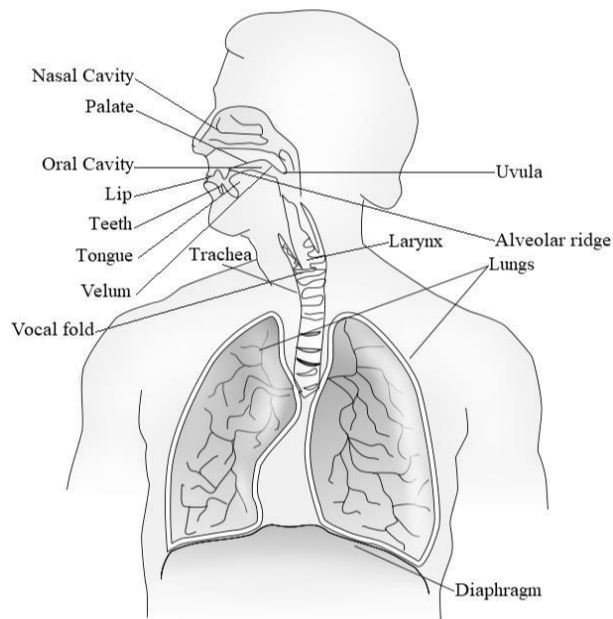
1.5 ORGANS OF SPEECH

The organs of speech, also known as the vocal organs or articulatory organs, are the anatomical structures involved in the production of speech sounds. These organs work together in a coordinated manner to create the various sounds of human languages. The main organs of speech and their roles are listed below:

- **Lungs:** The lungs provide the airflow necessary for speech production.

- Diaphragm: The diaphragm controls the airflow by expanding and contracting to regulate air pressure.
- Larynx: The larynx houses the vocal cords (vocal folds), which are responsible for generating sound through vibration.
- Pharynx: The pharynx is a muscular tube located at the back of the throat. It acts as a resonating chamber that modifies the quality of sounds produced by the vocal cords.
- Oral Cavity: The oral cavity or mouth, is where many speech sounds are formed. It include lips, tongue, teeth, teeth ridge, hard palate, soft palate (velum), and the uvula.
- Tongue: The tongue acts as the active articulator for articulating most of the speech sounds. It can move forward, backward, up, and down, and can also curl as per the need of articulating the sound accordingly.
- Nasal Cavity: The nasal cavity allows airflow through the nose while producing sounds.
- Glottis: It is the opening between the vocal cords. It can be widened or narrowed to control the airflow while producing speech sounds.

Each of these organs play a crucial role in the complex process of speech production; enabling humans to produce a wide range of sounds that form the basis of communication in language. Understanding the functions and interactions of these organs is fundamental in studying phonetics and phonology.



1.6 SPEECH MECHANISMS

The speech mechanism refers to the complex physiological and neurological processes involved in the production of speech sounds. It encompasses the coordination of various organs and structures within the human body to create the sounds that constitute language. There are three mechanisms involved in the production of speech sounds. They are discussed below:

- **AIRSTREAM MECHANISM:** The airstream mechanism refers to the process by which airflow is generated and manipulated to produce speech sounds. It plays a fundamental role in the production of sounds across different languages and includes three main types of airstream mechanisms:
 - i. Pulmonic Airstream Mechanism: It involves the expulsion of air from the lungs (pulmonic air) to create sound. This is the most common type of airstream mechanism used in human speech production.
 - ii. Glottalic Airstream Mechanism: It originates from a closure or compression in the vocal tract. Air is compressed in the oral cavity or the larynx, and when the closure is released, it produces a burst of sound.
 - iii. Velaric Airstream Mechanism: It involves creating a pocket of air between two closures within the oral cavity (often at the back of the tongue and the soft palate or the back of the tongue and the uvula). In the process when one of the closures are released, it creates a sudden change in air pressure.
- **PHONATION PROCESS:** The phonation process refers to the production of sound by the vibration of the vocal cords (vocal folds) within the larynx (voice box). The phonation process is essential for generating voiced speech sounds, such as vowels and voiced consonants. It requires precise coordination of muscular movements in the larynx and precise control of airflow from the lungs. Variations in phonation, such as pitch modulation and voice quality, contribute to the expressiveness and communicative power of spoken language.
- **ORO-NASAL PROCESS:** The oro-nasal process can be considered as a type of speech mechanism that involves the controlled interaction between the oral and nasal cavities during speech production. It underscores the importance of precise articulatory control and resonance management in natural and intelligible speech production.

These airstream mechanisms are fundamental in understanding the production of speech

sounds across different languages of the world.

1.7 IPA CHART

The International Phonetic Alphabet (IPA) Chart is a standardized representation of speech sounds used across languages. It consists of symbols that correspond to specific sounds, allowing linguists, language learners, and speech professionals to accurately transcribe and describe the pronunciation of words. The IPA Chart is arranged systematically, with consonants typically presented on the left and vowels on the right. Each symbol in the chart represents a single sound; and variations in pronunciation across languages are accurately captured using these symbols. The IPA Chart categorizes sounds into several broad categories:

THE INTERNATIONAL PHONETIC ALPHABET (revised to 2005)
 CONSONANTS (PULMONIC) © 2005 IPA

	Bilabial	Labiodental	Dental	Alveolar	Postalveolar	Retroflex	Palatal	Velar	Uvular	Pharyngeal	Glottal
Plosive	p b			t d		ʈ ɖ	c ɟ	k ɡ	q ɢ		ʔ
Nasal	m	ɱ		n		ɳ	ɲ	ŋ	ɴ		
Trill				r					ʀ		
Tap or Flap		ⱱ		ɾ		ɽ					
Fricative	ɸ β	f v	θ ð	s z	ʃ ʒ	ʂ ʐ	ç ʝ	x ɣ	χ ʁ	ħ ʕ	h ɦ
Lateral fricative				ɬ ɮ							
Approximant		ʋ		ɹ		ɻ	j	ɰ			
Lateral approximant				l		ɭ	ʎ	ʟ			

Where symbols appear in pairs, the one to the right represents a voiced consonant. Shaded areas denote articulations judged impossible.

CONSONANTS (NON-PULMONIC)

Clicks	Voiced implosives	Ejectives
ɔ Bilabial	ɓ Bilabial	ʼ Bilabial
ǀ Dental	ɗ Dental/alveolar	ɰ Dental/alveolar
ǃ (Post)alveolar	ɟ Palatal	ɰ Dental/alveolar
ǂ Palatoalveolar	ɡ Velar	ɰ Velar
ǁ Alveolar lateral	ɠ Uvular	ɰ Alveolar fricative

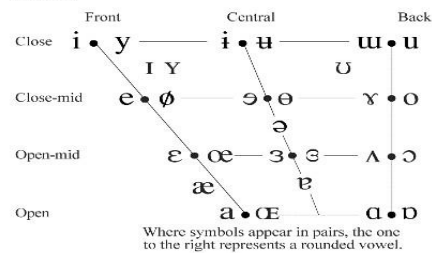
OTHER SYMBOLS

ɱ Voiceless labial-velar fricative	ɕ ʑ Alveolo-palatal fricatives
ɰ Voiced labial-velar approximant	ɺ Voiced alveolar lateral flap
ɰ Voiced labial-palatal approximant	ɺ Simultaneous ʃ and x
ɰ Voiceless epiglottal fricative	
ɰ Voiced epiglottal fricative	Affricates and double articulations can be represented by two symbols joined by a tie bar if necessary.
ʔ Epiglottal plosive	

DIACRITICS Diacritics may be placed above a symbol with a descender, e.g. ɱ̥

◌̥ Voiceless	◌̤ Breathy voiced	◌̦ Dental	◌̧ Apical
◌̦ Voiced	◌̧ Creaky voiced	◌̨ Laminal	◌̩ Nasalized
◌̧ Aspirated	◌̨ Linguolabial	◌̪ Nasal release	◌̫ Lateral release
◌̨ More rounded	◌̩ Labialized	◌̬ No audible release	
◌̩ Less rounded	◌̪ Palatalized		
◌̪ Advanced	◌̫ Velarized		
◌̫ Retracted	◌̬ Pharyngealized		
◌̬ Centralized	◌̭ Velarized or pharyngealized		
◌̭ Mid-centralized	◌̮ Raised		
◌̮ Syllabic	◌̯ Lowered		
◌̯ Non-syllabic	◌̰ Advanced Tongue Root		
◌̰ Rhoticity	◌̱ Retracted Tongue Root		

VOWELS



SUPRASEGMENTALS

ˈ	Primary stress
ˌ	Secondary stress
ː	Long
ˑ	Half-long
˚	Extra-short
˘	Minor (foot) group
˙	Major (intonation) group
ˑ	Syllable break
ˑ	Linking (absence of a break)

TONES AND WORD ACCENTS LEVEL		CONTOUR	
˥	Extra high	˥˥	Rising
˨	High	˥˨	Falling
˧	Mid	˥˧˥	High rising
˩	Low	˥˩˥	Low rising
˨˩	Extra low	˥˨˩˥	Rising-falling
˩˩	Downstep	˥˩˩˥	Global rise
˩˩˩	Upstep	˥˩˩˩˥	Global fall

1.7.1 CONSONANTS

These are sounds produced by obstructing or restricting airflow in the vocal tract. They are classified based on the place of articulation (where in the vocal tract the obstruction occurs), manner of articulation (how the obstruction is made), and voicing (whether the vocal cords vibrate during the production of the sound).

1.7.2 VOWELS

These are sounds produced without any significant obstruction in the vocal tract. Vowels are classified based on tongue height (high, mid, low), tongue backness (front, central, back), and lip rounding.

1.7.3 SUPRASEGMENTAL FEATURES

These include aspects of speech such as stress, intonation, tone, and length, which can affect the meaning and structure of words and sentences.

Stress

Stress refers to the emphasis placed on certain syllables or words within a sentence in spoken language. This emphasis can change the meaning of a sentence and is essential for effective communication. For example, in English, stress can differentiate between a noun and a verb, as in the word "record" (noun: a physical object with information) versus "record" (verb: the act of capturing information). Proper use of stress aids in the clarity and natural flow of speech, making it easier for listeners to understand the speaker's intent.

Intonation

Intonation is the variation in pitch while speaking, which helps convey different meanings, emotions, and intentions. It plays a crucial role in expressing questions, statements, exclamations, and other types of sentences. For instance, a rising intonation at the end of a sentence often indicates a question ("Are you coming?"), while a falling intonation can signify a statement ("I am coming."). Intonation helps to add nuance and emotion to spoken language, making it more expressive and engaging.

Elision

Elision is the process in phonetics where sounds are omitted in speech to make pronunciation easier and speech more fluent. This often occurs in casual or rapid speech. For example, in English, "I am" can be elided to "I'm," and "going to" can become "gonna."

Elision helps speakers to communicate more efficiently by smoothing over potentially awkward or cumbersome sounds, though it can sometimes lead to misunderstandings if listeners are not familiar with the abbreviated forms.

Assimilation

Assimilation is a phonological process where a sound changes to become more like a neighboring sound. This occurs to make speech more fluid and easier to produce. For instance, in English, the word "input" often sounds like "imput" because the nasal sound "n" assimilates to the bilabial sound "p." Similarly, "good boy" might be pronounced "goob boy." Assimilation helps in the seamless flow of speech but requires listeners to be adept at recognizing these changes to maintain understanding.

1.8 CARDINAL VOWEL SCALE

The Cardinal Vowel Scale defines a set of reference points within the vowel space, representing extremes of vowel articulation that are acoustically distinct and easily identifiable. The Cardinal Vowel Scale is a system for categorizing and describing vowel sounds based on their position within the vowel space of the human vocal tract. Developed by Daniel Jones in the early 20th century, the scale provides a standardized method for linguists and phoneticians to analyse and compare vowels across different languages. It provides a framework for analyzing and comparing vowels in a structured and standardized manner, contributing to our understanding of phonetics and phonology.

1.9 UNDERSTANDING PHONOLOGY

Phonology is a subfield of linguistics that focuses on how sounds function within a particular language or languages. Phonology studies the systematic organization and patterning of sounds (phonemes) in languages. It focuses on the abstract, cognitive aspects of speech sounds rather than their physical production or acoustic properties. Phonology studies the combination of sounds into organized units of speech, the formation of syllables and larger units (Syal and Jindal, 2007). Though Phonology is considered to be the surface or superficial level of language, there are some aspects of it such as tone which contribute to the meaning of an utterance (Syal and Jindal, 2007). Understanding phonology involves delving into the intricate system of sounds within languages, exploring both the theoretical frameworks and empirical data that illuminate how these systems function and evolve. Phonology is essential for comprehending the structure and organization of language.

CHECK YOUR PROGRESS

- a. How does Robins define language?
- b. What is Sapir's definition of language?
- c. How does Chomsky describe language?
- d. What is the definition of language according to Bloch and Trager?
- e. What is one characteristic of language?
- f. Why is language considered primarily vocal?
- g. Explain the arbitrariness of language.
- h. How does language function as a form of social behavior?
- i. Why is language described as productive?
- j. What is linguistics?
- k. What does phonetics study?
- l. What are the three branches of phonetics?
- m. Name the main organs of speech.
- n. What is the role of the diaphragm in speech?
- o. What is the phonation process?
- p. Define the International Phonetic Alphabet (IPA) Chart.
- q. What are consonants and how are they classified?
- r. How are vowels classified?
- s. What is stress in linguistics?
- t. Explain intonation in spoken language.
- u. Define elision in phonetics.
- v. What is assimilation in phonology?
- w. What is the Cardinal Vowel Scale?
- x. What is phonology?

1.9.1 SOME CONCEPTS OF PHONOLOGY

- **PHONEME:** The smallest distinctive unit of a language is often referred to as a phoneme. It distinguishes one word from another. In linguistics, phonemes are considered as the abstract representations of sounds, which means they can vary in pronunciation while still being perceived as the same sound by speakers of the language.
- **PHONE:** In linguistics, a "phone" refers to a speech sound or a segment of speech that is produced by the vocal apparatus. Unlike a phoneme, which is an abstract unit used to distinguish between words in a language, a phone refers to the actual physical realization of a sound. Phones can include all variations in pronunciation that occur due to factors such as accents, speaking rate, emphasis, and context. They are the concrete manifestations of speech sounds that occur in real-world speech.
- **ALLOPHONE:** An allophone refers to any of the variant forms of a phoneme. In other words, allophones are different ways in which a particular phoneme can be realized or pronounced in different contexts or environments within a language. These variations typically do not change the meaning of a word for speakers of the language, but they can affect how the phoneme is perceived or pronounced. Allophones can vary based on factors such as phonetic environment, adjacent sounds, stress, and speaking style.
- **MINIMAL PAIR:** A minimal pair is a pair of words in a language that differ by only one phoneme (sound), and that difference is sufficient to distinguish between their meanings. Minimal pairs are important in phonology because they demonstrate the significance of phonemes in distinguishing words from each other.
- **FREE VARIATION:** Free variation refers to the phenomenon where two or more different ways of pronouncing a sound (or a sequence of sounds) occur in a language without affecting the meaning of the words. In other words, speakers can freely choose between these variants without creating a distinction in meaning. Free variation can occur due to regional differences, individual speaker preferences, or stylistic factors.
- **DISTRIBUTION:** In linguistics, "distribution" refers to the systematic occurrence of linguistic units (such as phonemes, morphemes, or syntactic structures) in different contexts within a language. The study of distribution helps linguists understand how these units are organized and used in the language.

A few key aspects of distribution in linguistics are mentioned below:

- **Complementary Distribution:** This occurs when two or more linguistic units (such as phonemes) occur in mutually exclusive environments. In other words, each unit appears in specific contexts where the others do not. For example, in English, the sounds [p] and [p^h] (aspirated [p]) are in complementary distribution. [p^h] occurs only at the beginning of stressed syllables, whereas [p] occurs elsewhere.
- **Contrastive Distribution:** This occurs when the occurrence of different linguistic units (such as phonemes) can distinguish between words and thus affect meaning. Minimal pairs, which we discussed earlier, demonstrate contrastive distribution. For example, the sounds /p/ and /b/ in English distinguish between "pat" and "bat."
- **Free Distribution:** This occurs when two or more linguistic units can occur in the same context without creating a distinction in meaning. Free variation, which we discussed earlier, is an example of free distribution where different pronunciations or forms are acceptable and interchangeable.
- **SYLLABLE:** A syllable is a basic unit of organization in spoken languages, typically consisting of a vowel sound (or nucleus) and optionally one or more consonant sounds (onsets and codas) that may surround it. Syllables are fundamental building blocks of words and play a crucial role in phonological and phonetic analysis. The key components of a syllable are:
 - **Nucleus:** This is usually a vowel sound, which forms the core or peak of the syllable.
 - **Onset:** This consists of one or more consonant sounds that precede the nucleus within the syllable. Not all syllables have onsets.
 - **Coda:** This consists of one or more consonant sounds that follow the nucleus within the syllable. Some syllables lack codas.

1.10 LET US SUM UP

Language can be best defined in terms of its characteristics although various linguists have tried to define language in their own ways. After reading this unit, we can conclude that language is integrally intertwined with human society. Language has been indispensable for the development of human civilization. Language has been instrumental in humanity's progression from the Stone Age, enabling significant advancements in science, art, and

technology. Linguistics can be defined as the scientific study of language. Linguistics aims to describe language, investigate its nature, and formulate theories about its structure and functions.

1.11 KEY WORDS

Language; Vocal; Arbitrary; Linguistics; Phonetics; Speech organ; Speech mechanism; Phonation; Suprasegmental; Phoneme; Phone; Allophone; Syllable

1.12 FURTHER READINGS

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1.13 ANSWERS TO CHECK YOUR PROGRESS

- a. Robins defines language as a symbol system based on pure or arbitrary conventions, infinitely extendable and modifiable.
- b. Sapir defines language as a purely human and non-instinctive method of communicating ideas, emotions, and desires by means of a system of voluntarily produced symbols.
- c. Chomsky describes language as a set (finite or infinite) of sentences, each finite in length and constructed out of a finite set of elements.
- d. Bloch and Trager define language as a system of arbitrary vocal symbols by means of which a social group cooperates.
- e. One characteristic of language is that it is a means of communication.

- f. Language is considered primarily vocal because it is predominantly spoken and heard, involving the production and reception of sounds.
- g. The arbitrariness of language means there is no inherent connection between linguistic signs and their meanings; the relationship is based on social convention.
- h. Language functions as a form of social behavior by facilitating interaction, establishing relationships, and transmitting cultural values.
- i. Language is described as productive because speakers can create and understand an infinite number of original utterances.
- j. Linguistics is the scientific study of languages, focusing on how language is organized to fulfill human needs as a system of communication.
- k. Phonetics studies language at the level of sounds.
- l. The three branches of phonetics are articulatory phonetics, acoustic phonetics, and auditory phonetics.
- m. The main organs of speech are the lungs, diaphragm, larynx, pharynx, oral cavity, tongue, nasal cavity, and glottis.
- n. The diaphragm controls the airflow by expanding and contracting to regulate air pressure.
- o. The phonation process refers to the production of sound by the vibration of the vocal cords within the larynx.
- p. The International Phonetic Alphabet (IPA) Chart is a standardized representation of speech sounds used across languages.
- q. Consonants are sounds produced by obstructing airflow in the vocal tract, classified by place and manner of articulation, and voicing.
- r. Vowels are classified based on tongue height, tongue backness, and lip rounding.
- s. Stress refers to the emphasis placed on certain syllables or words within a sentence in spoken language.
- t. Intonation is the variation in pitch while speaking, which helps convey different meanings, emotions, and intentions.
- u. Elision is the process where sounds are omitted in speech to make pronunciation easier and speech more fluent.

- v. Assimilation is a phonological process where a sound changes to become more like a neighboring sound.
- w. The Cardinal Vowel Scale is a system for categorizing and describing vowel sounds based on their position within the vowel space.
- x. Phonology is the study of the systematic organization and patterning of sounds in languages.

1.14 MODEL QUESTIONS

1. What is phonetics?
2. What are the important organs of speech?
3. What are vowels and consonants? Elaborate.
4. Discuss the various definitions of language provided by linguists such as Robins, Sapir, Chomsky, and Bloch & Trager. How do these definitions reflect different perspectives on the nature of language? Provide examples to support your analysis.
5. Examine the characteristics of language outlined in the text: being a means of communication, primarily vocal, arbitrary, a form of social behavior, and productive. How do these characteristics collectively contribute to our understanding of language as a fundamental aspect of human interaction?
6. Analyze the various branches of phonetics. Discuss the significance of each branch in the study of language sounds.
7. Explore the concepts of phonology discussed in the text, including phonemes, phones, allophones, minimal pairs, free variation, and distribution.

UNIT 2 MORPHEMES

Unit Structure

2.0 Learning Objectives

2.1 Definition of Morphemes

2.2 Classification of Morphemes

Bound Morphemes, Free Morphemes, Derivational and
Inflectional Morphemes, Zero Morphemes, Allomorph

2.3 Let Us Sum Up

2.4 Further Readings

2.5 Answers to check your progress

2.6 Model Questions

2.0 LEARNING OBJECTIVES

In this unit learners will be able to :

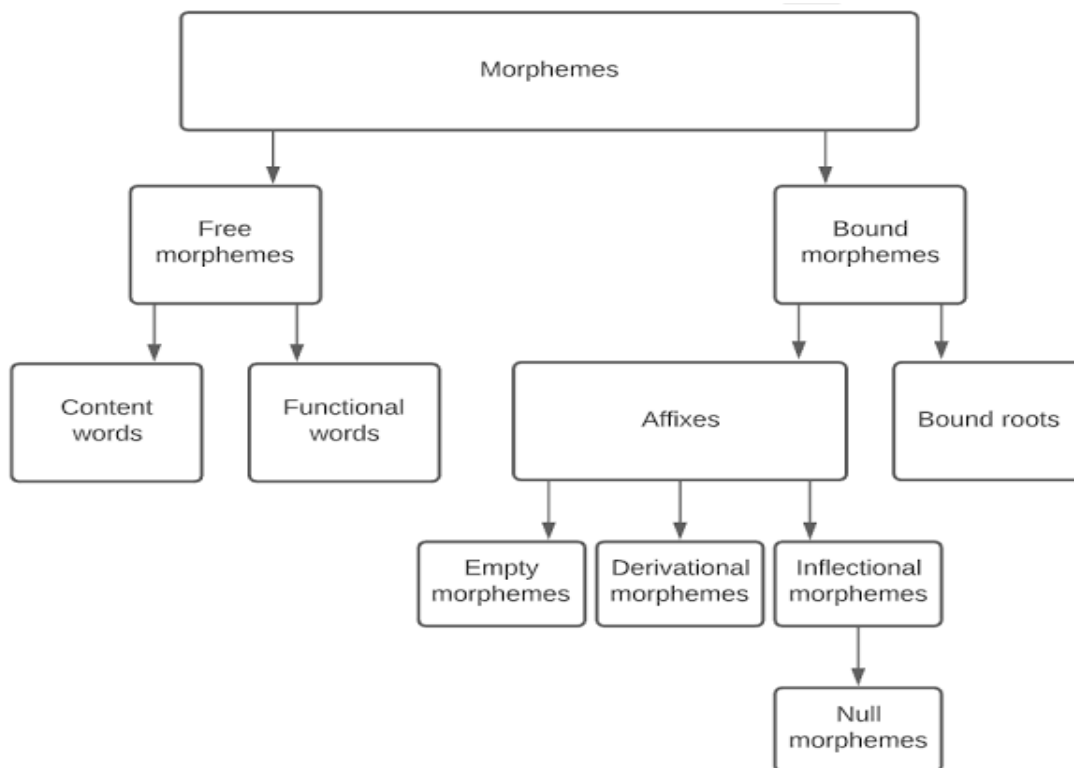
- Define morphemes and explain their significance as the smallest units of meaning in language.
- Differentiate between free and bound morphemes with relevant examples.
- Explain the concept of empty morphemes and their grammatical function.
- Provide examples of empty morphemes and discuss their role in marking grammatical relationships.
- Identify examples of zero morphemes in different contexts.
- Evaluate the role of morphemes in language structure and communication.

2.1 DEFINITION OF MORPHEME

The term "morpheme" originates from the Greek word "morphē," meaning "form" or "shape." It was introduced into linguistic terminology in the early 20th century by linguists who sought to describe the smallest units of meaning within a language. The concept of the morpheme is fundamental to the field of morphology, which studies the structure and formation of words. This idea was developed as part of the broader efforts in structural linguistics to systematically analyze and understand the components of language. Thus, morphemes are the smallest units of meaning in a language. They have semantic content and

grammatical function. They cannot be divided further without losing or altering their meaning. Morphemes can be words themselves or parts of words, such as prefixes (e.g., "un-"), suffixes (e.g., "-ing"), or root words that form the basis for more complex terms. Each morpheme contributes to the overall meaning or grammatical function of the word it is part of.

2.2 CLASSIFICATION OF MORPHEME



Classification of Morphemes:

Free Morphemes: These can stand alone as words and convey meaning by themselves. Examples include "book," "run," and "happy."

Bound Morphemes: These cannot stand alone and must be attached to other morphemes to convey meaning. Bound morphemes include:

- **Prefixes:** Attached to the beginning of a word (e.g., "un-" in "unhappy").
- **Suffixes:** Attached to the end of a word (e.g., "-ing" in "running").

- **Infixes:** Inserted within a word, though rare in English.
- **Circumfixes:** Attached to both the beginning and end of a word, though not common in English.

Additionally, morphemes can also be classified based on their function:

Derivational Morphemes: These change the meaning or part of speech of a word (e.g., "happiness" from "happy").

Inflectional Morphemes: These modify a word's tense, number, aspect, mood, or gender without changing its core meaning (e.g., "books" from "book").

Portmanteau Morphemes:

Portmanteau morphemes are single morphemes that combine multiple meanings or grammatical functions that would typically be expressed by two or more separate morphemes. They often occur in inflected forms of words.

Examples:

In French, the word "au" is a portmanteau of "à" (to) and "le" (the), meaning "to the."

In English, contractions like "I'm" (I + am) and "won't" (will + not) are considered portmanteau morphemes.

Empty Morphemes:

Empty morphemes, also known as null morphemes or zero morphemes, are elements in linguistic structure that do not contribute any phonological content but still serve a grammatical function. They are typically involved in marking grammatical relationships or distinctions without adding any overt phonetic material to the word or sentence.

Characteristics of Empty Morphemes:

- *Grammatical Function:*

They indicate grammatical relationships such as tense, number, case, agreement, etc., without having a phonetic realization.

- *Contextual Realization:*

They are contextually realized based on syntactic or morphological rules rather than having a fixed phonological form.

Examples:

- *Plural marking in English:* In regular plurals like "cats" or "dogs," the plural marker "-s" is a phonologically realized morpheme. However, in irregular plurals like "sheep" (singular and plural) or "fish" (singular and plural), there is no overt plural marker; the distinction is understood contextually.
- *Third person singular present tense in English:* The verb form "walks" in "He walks" has an overt marker "-s" indicating third person singular present tense. In contrast, in "They walk," there is no overt marker for third person plural present tense, but the absence of "-s" signals plurality.
- *Semantic Transparency:*

Empty morphemes do not contribute to the semantic meaning of a word or sentence but are crucial for grammatical structure and sentence formation.

Empty morphemes play a significant role in linguistic analysis, particularly in understanding morphosyntactic processes and the internal structure of languages.

CHECK YOUR PROGRESS

- a. What is the origin of the term "morpheme"?
- b. When was the term "morpheme" introduced into linguistic terminology?
- c. What does the study of morphology focus on?
- d. What are morphemes?
- e. Can morphemes be divided further without losing meaning?
- f. What are free morphemes?
- g. Give examples of free morphemes.
- h. What are bound morphemes?
- i. What is a prefix?
- j. What is a suffix?
- k. What is an infix?
- l. Are infixes common in English?
- m. What is a circumfix?
- n. Are circumfixes common in English?

- o. What are derivational morphemes?**
- p. Give an example of a derivational morpheme.**
- q. What are inflectional morphemes?**
- r. Give an example of an inflectional morpheme.**
- s. What are portmanteau morphemes?**
- t. Give an example of a portmanteau morpheme in French.**
- u. Give an example of a portmanteau morpheme in English.**

Zero Morphemes

Zero morphemes, also known as null morphemes or empty morphemes, are morphemes that are implied or understood but not physically present in the word. They represent a grammatical contrast that doesn't involve any overt affix.

Examples: In English, the plural of "sheep" is "sheep," and the past tense of "hit" is "hit." These forms show a grammatical change (plurality and past tense, respectively) without any visible change in the word form.

The singular form of many nouns can be considered to have a zero morpheme marking the singular (e.g., "cat" as opposed to "cats" where "-s" marks the plural).

These types of morphemes add complexity to the understanding and analysis of morphological structures in languages.

Allomorphs

Allomorphs are different phonological or morphophonological forms of a morpheme. They represent variations in the realization of a morpheme under different linguistic contexts, such as phonological, morphological, or syntactic conditions. Allomorphs typically share the same underlying meaning or grammatical function but exhibit different phonetic shapes.

Types of Allomorphs:

- a) **Phonologically conditioned** allomorphs: Variants of a morpheme that occur due to phonological rules or phonetic environment.
Example: The plural morpheme in English has different forms like /s/, /z/, or /ɪz/ depending on the preceding phoneme (e.g., /s/ in "cats," /z/ in "dogs," /ɪz/ in "horses").
- b) **Morphologically conditioned** allomorphs: Variants that appear due to

morphological factors, such as the presence of certain affixes or stems.

Example: The past tense morpheme in English can have different forms like /d/ (e.g., "played"), /t/ (e.g., "walked"), or /ɪd/ (e.g., "wanted") depending on the final phoneme of the base form.

- c) **Lexically conditioned** allomorphs: Variants that are specific to particular lexical items or morphemes.

Example: The plural form of "child" is "children," which undergoes a vowel change (umlaut) compared to regular plurals like "cats."

2.3 LET US SUM UP

In this unit we have learnt that morphemes are the smallest units of meaning in a language, carrying both semantic content and grammatical function. They cannot be divided further without altering their meaning and can be standalone words or parts of words like prefixes, suffixes, and root words.

2.4 FURTHER READING

- Aronoff, Mark and Fuderman, Kirsten. 2011. *What is Morphology?* 2nd ed. Oxford: Wiley-Blackwell.
- Booij, Geert. 2007 *The Grammar of Words. An Introduction to linguistic Morphology.* 2nd ed. OUP.
- Carstairs-McCarthy, A. 1992. *Current Morphology.* Routledge.
- Katamba, F. & J.T. Stonham. 2006. *Morphology.* Palgrave Macmillan.
- Matthews, P. 1991. *Morphology.* 2nd edition. CUP.
- Spencer, A. 1991. *Morphological Theory.* Blackwell.
- Haspelmath, M. 2010. *Understanding Morphology.* 2nd ed. Hodder Education.

2.5 ANSWERS TO CHECK YOUR PROGRESS

- a. It originates from the Greek word "morphē," meaning "form" or "shape."
- b. In the early 20th century.
- c. The structure and formation of words.
- d. The smallest units of meaning in a language.

- e. No, they cannot.
- f. Morphemes that can stand alone as words.
- g. "Book," "run," and "happy."
- h. Morphemes that cannot stand alone and must be attached to other morphemes.
- i. A bound morpheme attached to the beginning of a word (e.g., "un-" in "unhappy").
- j. A bound morpheme attached to the end of a word (e.g., "-ing" in "running").
- k. A bound morpheme inserted within a word.
- l. No, they are rare.
- m. A bound morpheme attached to both the beginning and end of a word.
- n. No, they are not.
- o. Morphemes that change the meaning or part of speech of a word.
- p. "Happiness" from "happy."
- q. Morphemes that modify a word's tense, number, aspect, mood, or gender without changing its core meaning.
- r. "Books" from "book."
- s. Single morphemes that combine multiple meanings or grammatical functions.
- t. "Au" (à + le).
- u. "I'm" (I + am).

2.6 MODEL QUESTIONS

1. Define morphemes and explain their significance in linguistic analysis.
2. Differentiate between free and bound morphemes, providing two examples of each.
3. Explain the role of derivational morphemes and how they differ from inflectional morphemes, using appropriate examples.
4. What are portmanteau morphemes? Provide two examples from different languages and explain their components.
5. Describe empty morphemes and their grammatical function, including examples to illustrate your points.
6. Discuss the concept of zero morphemes and provide examples from English that demonstrate their use.

7. Define allomorphs and explain the different types of conditioning that affect their manifestation, with examples.
 8. Explain how contextual realization impacts the understanding of empty morphemes, providing examples from English.
 9. Analyse the significance of phonologically conditioned allomorphs in English pluralization with appropriate examples.
 10. Compare and contrast morphologically conditioned and lexically conditioned allomorphs, providing examples of each.
-

UNIT 3 SYNTAX

Unit Structure

- 3.1 Learning Objectives
- 3.2 Sentence Patterns
- 3.3 Syntactic Analysis
- 3.4 Let Us Sum Up
- 3.5 Further Readings
- 3.6 Model Questions

3.1 LEARNING OBJECTIVES

Learners will gain a comprehensive understanding of syntax, its rules, patterns, and analytical methods, enabling them to analyze and construct grammatically correct sentences in English and other languages. Mainly they will be able to :

- Explain the concept of syntax and its importance in linguistics.
- Recognize and differentiate between basic clause patterns (SV, SVA, SVC, SVO, SVOA, SVOC, SVOOC).
- Define and use common phrase structure rules to analyze sentences.
 - Represent IC analysis using tree diagrams to visualize sentence structure.

3.2 SENTENCE PATTERN

Syntax is the branch of linguistics which deals with the construction of sentences. The origin of the word “syntax” is from Greek and it literally means “a putting together” or “arrangement.” From early 20th century, a number of approaches were introduced to the field by several linguists. The dominant theory of syntax was proposed by Noam Chomsky in 1950s. There has been a greater focus on the underlying rule system that we use to produce or “generate” sentences to analyze structure in the more recent attempts.

There is always some basic pattern of sentences as any sentence can be ultimately reduced to one of these patterns. Let us look at the following sentence:

Before it rained, the students hurriedly reached the campus by hiring an auto-rickshaw.

If we look into the sentence, we can see that it can be reduced to the basic structure as follows:

a) The students reached the campus.

This is one basic pattern of sentences which consists of the subject, the verb and an object. There are other patterns which are sometimes called ‘basic clause patterns’. Let us look into these patterns which are as follows:

1. SV (Subject + Verb)

This is the simplest pattern in which the minimum necessary elements are the subject and the verb. The addition of any extra elements to expand the sentence is optional in this case. For example:

- Dogs bark.
- She sings.

2. SVA (Subject+Verb+Adjunct)

In this pattern of sentences, the main elements are the subject, the verb and the adjunct. Adjuncts are modifiers that adds extra information to a sentence which are optional. For examples:

- We went to the riverside yesterday.
- He left for Mumbai by train.

3. SVC (Subject+ Verb+ Complement)

This pattern of sentences consists of the subject, the verb and the complement. Complements are words or groups of words that helps to complete the meaning of a predicate in a sentence. Complements are obligatory unlike the adjuncts. For example:

- Her mother is a doctor.
- She is happy.

4. SVO (Subject +Verb + Object)

In this pattern, the major elements are the subject, the verb and the object. One might get confused between nouns as complements and nouns as objects. One test can be the ‘test of passivisation’. When we change a sentence into a passive form, the noun as the object noun will become the subject noun in the passive sentence. This will lead to the confirmation that the noun in the original sentence is an object. For example:

- I love chocolates
- She bought a car.

5. SVOA (Subject+ Verb + Object + Adjunct)

Adjunct plays an important role in addition to the subject, the verb and the object. Adjuncts are usually adverbs or prepositional phrases.

- He kept the keys on the table.
- The hunter left the dead animal at the forests.

6. SVOC (Subject + Verb + Object + Complement)

The major elements in this pattern include a complement along with the subject, the verb and the object. Complements can be ‘subject complement’ or ‘object complement’.

- She found the book interesting.
- They elected him the President.
-

7. SVOOC (Subject + Verb + Object + Object)

In addition to the subject and verb, the major element in this pattern include the two objects- direct object and indirect object. A direct object is the noun or pronoun that receives the action of the verb directly. The indirect object is the noun or pronoun that receives the direct object or benefits from the action of the verb. For example:

- He told me a secret.
- She gave him a present.

3.3 SYNTACTIC ANALYSIS

In syntactic analysis, in order to identify the parts of speech, some conventional abbreviations are used like N (=noun), Det (=Determiner), Adj (=adjective) and V (=verb), etc. Abbreviations for phrases are used such as NP (= noun phrase), VP (=verb phrase). There are three more symbols that are commonly used in syntactic categories.

The first symbol is in the form of \rightarrow . It can be interpreted as “consists of” or “rewrites as”. In the noun phrase (NP) the dog consists of or rewrites as (\rightarrow) an article which is represented as determiner (Det) the and a noun (N) dog which can be represented in the

following type of rule:

$NP \rightarrow Det N$

The second symbol is a pair of round brackets (). Any word that comes inside these round brackets will be considered as an optional constituent. In the noun phrase (NP) the (Det) small (Adj) dog (N), where small (Adj) is optional can be represented as:

$NP \rightarrow Det (Adj)N$

The third symbol is the curly brackets { }. These indicate that only one of the elements enclosed within the curly brackets must be selected. In the noun phrase (NP), the (Art) dog (n) or it (Pro) or John (PN) can be shown in three separate rules. By using curly brackets, only one rule can be written which are shown as follows:

$$\begin{array}{l}
 NP \rightarrow Det N \\
 NP \rightarrow Pro \\
 NP \rightarrow PN
 \end{array}
 \quad
 \begin{array}{l}
 NP \rightarrow \\
 PN
 \end{array}
 \left\{ \begin{array}{l}
 Det N \\
 Pro
 \end{array} \right\}
 \quad
 NP \rightarrow \{ Det N, Pro, PN \}$$

Although there are three constituents inside these curly brackets, only one of them can be selected on any occasion. The list of common symbols and abbreviations can be summarized here.

S sentence	NP noun phrase	PN proper noun
N noun	VP verb phrase	Adv adverb
V verb	Adj adjective	Prep preposition
Det determiner	Pro pronoun	PP prepositional phrase

3.3.1 ungrammatical sentence

➔ consists of // rewrites as

() optional constituent

{ } one and only one of these constituents must be selected.

Phrase structure rules are a set of rules that dictate how words can be combined to form phrases and sentences in a language that convey meaning.

Some common phrase structure rules include:

1. S → NP VP (a sentence consists of a noun phrase and a verb phrase)
2. NP → Det N (a noun phrase consists of a determiner and a noun)
3. VP → V NP (a verb phrase consists of a verb and a noun phrase)
4. PP → P NP (a prepositional phrase consists of a preposition and a noun phrase)

If we look into the sentence “the boy kicked the ball”, the phrase structure rules of this sentence will be as follows:

S → the boy kicked the ball.

NP → the boy

Det → the

N → boy

VP → kicked the ball

V → kicked

N → the ball

Phrase structure rules are important in linguistics because they help to reveal the underlying structure of language and how it is used to convey meaning.

CHECK YOUR PROGRESS

- a. **What is syntax?**
- b. **What is the origin of the word "syntax"?**
- c. **When was the dominant theory of syntax proposed by Noam Chomsky?**
- d. **What is the basic pattern of the sentence "Before it rained, the students hurriedly reached the campus by hiring an auto-rickshaw"?**
- e. **What does the pattern SV (Subject + Verb) consist of?**

- f. Give an example of a sentence with the SV pattern.**
- g. What does the pattern SVA (Subject + Verb + Adjunct) consist of?**
- h. Give an example of a sentence with the SVA pattern.**
- i. What does the pattern SVC (Subject + Verb + Complement) consist of?**
- j. Give an example of a sentence with the SVC pattern.**
- k. What does the pattern SVO (Subject + Verb + Object) consist of?**
- l. Give an example of a sentence with the SVO pattern.**
- m. What does the pattern SVOA (Subject + Verb + Object + Adjunct) consist of?**
- n. Give an example of a sentence with the SVOA pattern.**
- o. What does the pattern SVOC (Subject + Verb + Object + Complement) consist of?**
- p. Give an example of a sentence with the SVOC pattern.**
- q. What does the pattern SVOOC (Subject + Verb + Object + Object) consist of?**
- r. Give an example of a sentence with the SVOOC pattern.**
- s. What is syntactic analysis?**
- t. What does the symbol "→" represent in syntactic analysis?**
- u. What does the symbol "()" indicate in syntactic analysis?**
- v. What does the symbol "{ }" indicate in syntactic analysis?**

Immediate Constituent analysis

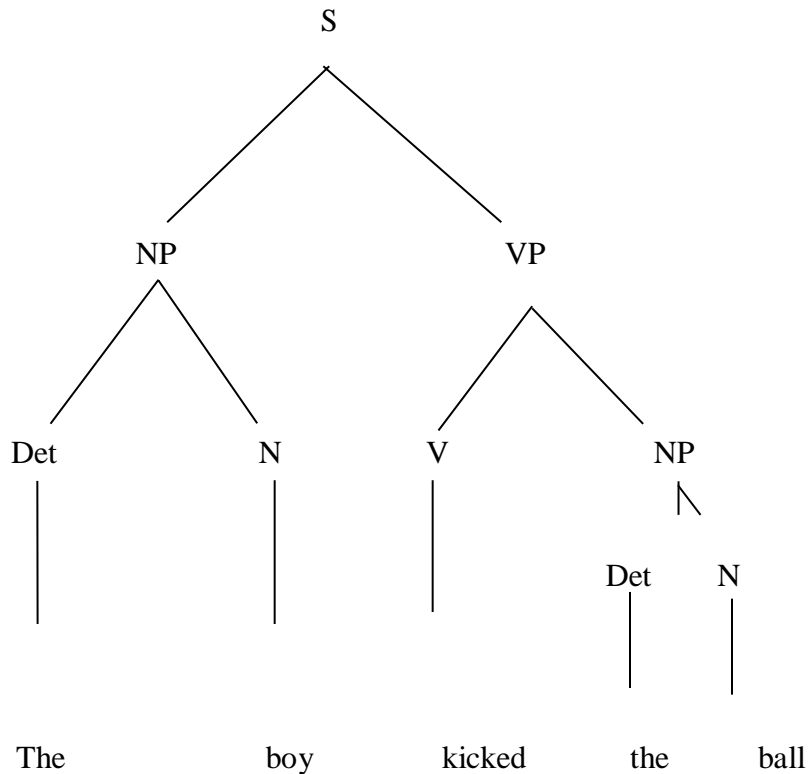
IC analysis stands for Immediate Constituent analysis, which is a method used in linguistics to break down sentences into their constituent parts and reveal their underlying structure. In IC analysis, a sentence is divided into its immediate constituents, which are the smallest units that still convey meaning. These constituents are then further divided into their own immediate constituents, until the smallest units, such as words and morphemes, are reached.

The analysis is typically represented in a tree diagram, with the sentence at the top and the constituents branching out below. This allows linguists to visualize the hierarchical

structure of the sentence and identify the relationships between the different constituents.

For example, the sentence "The boy kicked the ball" would be analyzed as follows:

The boy kicked the ball.



3.4 LET US SUM UP

In this unit learners have learnt about Syntax as a branch of linguistics focusing on the construction and arrangement of sentences. The term "syntax" originates from Greek, meaning "a putting together" or "arrangement." Since the early 20th century, several approaches have emerged, with Noam Chomsky's theory from the 1950s being particularly influential. Recent syntactic analysis emphasizes the underlying rules used to generate sentences. Syntax involves understanding the structure of sentences through various patterns and rules. It includes analyzing basic clause patterns, using conventional symbols, and applying phrase structure rules to understand the hierarchical arrangement of words and phrases. Immediate Constituent analysis further breaks down sentences to reveal their underlying structure, aiding in linguistic analysis and comprehension.

3.5 FURTHER READING

- 3.5.1 Carnie, Andrew. 2013. *Syntax. A Generative Introduction*. 3rd edition. Wiley-Blackwell.
- 3.5.2 Falk, Yehuda. 2001. *Lexical Functional Grammar: An Introduction to Parallel Constraint-Based Syntax*. CSLI.
- 3.5.3 Haegeman, Liliane. 1994. *Introduction to Government and Binding Theory*. 2nd ed. Wiley-Blackwell.
- 3.5.4 Kroeger, Paul R. 2005. *Analyzing syntax: A lexical-functional approach*. CUP.

3.6 ANSWERS TO CHECK YOUR PROGRESS

- a. Syntax is the branch of linguistics that deals with the construction of sentences.
- b. The origin of the word "syntax" is from Greek and it literally means "a putting together" or "arrangement."
- c. In the 1950s.
- d. The basic pattern is "The students reached the campus."
- e. The pattern consists of a subject and a verb.
- f. "Dogs bark."
- g. The pattern consists of a subject, a verb, and an adjunct.
- h. "We went to the riverside yesterday."
- i. The pattern consists of a subject, a verb, and a complement.
- j. "Her mother is a doctor."
- k. The pattern consists of a subject, a verb, and an object.
- l. "I love chocolates."
- m. The pattern consists of a subject, a verb, an object, and an adjunct.
- n. "He kept the keys on the table."
- o. The pattern consists of a subject, a verb, an object, and a complement.
- p. "She found the book interesting."
- q. The pattern consists of a subject, a verb, a direct object, and an indirect object.

- r. "He told me a secret."
- s. Syntactic analysis is the process of identifying the parts of speech and their functions in a sentence.
- t. It represents "consists of" or "rewrites as."
- u. It indicates an optional constituent.
- v. It indicates that only one of the enclosed elements must be selected.

3.7 MODEL QUESTIONS

1. Explain the different basic clause patterns in English syntax and provide examples for each pattern. How can complex sentences be reduced to these basic patterns?
2. Discuss the significance of Noam Chomsky's contributions to the field of syntax. How has his theory influenced modern syntactic analysis, and what are the key aspects of his approach?
3. Describe the process of syntactic analysis using conventional abbreviations and symbols. How do these symbols help in identifying the parts of speech and the structure of noun phrases and verb phrases? Include examples to illustrate your points.
4. Define phrase structure rules and explain their importance in understanding the underlying structure of language. Using the sentence "The boy kicked the ball," demonstrate how phrase structure rules are applied to reveal the sentence's hierarchical structure.
5. What is Immediate Constituent (IC) analysis, and how does it help in breaking down sentences into their smallest meaningful units?

UNIT 4 HOW TO LEARN A LANGUAGE (LSRW)

Unit Structure

- 4.1 Learning Objectives
- 4.2 Introduction to LSRW
- 4.3 Methods of Language Learning
- 4.4 Let Us Sum Up

4.5 Further Readings

4.6 Answers to check your progress

4.7 Model Questions

4.1 LEARNING OBJECTIVES

In this unit, learners will be able to

- Develop the ability to understand and interpret spoken messages accurately.
- Enhance the skill of discerning the main ideas and supporting details in conversations, lectures, and presentations.
- Develop clear and fluent speaking abilities, focusing on pronunciation, intonation, and pace.
- Expand vocabulary and practice using varied language structures to articulate thoughts effectively.
- Develop the ability to understand and analyze various text forms, including articles, reports, and emails.
- Enhance skills in identifying key points, arguments, and evidence within a text.
- Master writing skills necessary for professional documents, such as emails, reports, proposals, and letters.
- Enhance the ability to conduct thorough research and incorporate findings into well-structured written pieces.

4.2 INTRODUCTION TO LSRW

What Are Language Skills?

Effective communication relies on a set of language skills that empower individuals to articulate their thoughts cohesively and engage in meaningful interactions with others. These skills, namely reading, writing, listening, and speaking, form the foundation of basic language proficiency. In the act of communication, individuals often employ a blend of these skills, weaving them seamlessly to convey information with structure and relevance. The selection of specific skills is contingent upon several factors, including the urgency of the message, the intended audience size, and the formality of the communication. The interplay of these language skills enables individuals to navigate diverse communicative scenarios with precision and efficacy.

4 Essentials Language Skills

Here are the four basic language skills that can help improve how to communicate effectively:

1. *Listening* :

Active listening is a multifaceted skill encompassing the understanding, interpretation, and analysis of a speaker's message. It stands as a pivotal component within the communication process, demanding the listener's engagement and active comprehension. This not only enhances clarity but also facilitates the formulation of pertinent questions, the crafting of appropriate responses, and the avoidance of misunderstandings. The significance of attentive listening extends to various communication settings, including meetings, discussions, feedback sessions, and interviews.

The benefits of attentive listening extend beyond the immediate conversation, proving to be invaluable even after its conclusion. Actively engaging with the speaker enables the listener to process and retain information for later recall. Moreover, directing focus toward the speaker fosters concentration, ultimately aiding in the effective articulation of one's thoughts. In essence, mastering the art of active listening enriches communication skills, fostering a deeper understanding and proficiency in diverse conversational contexts.

2. *Speaking* :

Speaking is the articulate verbal manifestation of one's thoughts and ideas, requiring a mastery of clarity, fluency, and an expansive vocabulary. Effective speaking goes beyond mere linguistic proficiency, encompassing crucial attributes like confidence, passion, and the art of storytelling. In professional realms, particularly during hiring processes, the significance of robust speaking skills becomes more important. Proficiency in speaking not only propels career advancement but also empowers individuals to actively contribute in meetings and enhance interpersonal relationships. Adeptness in the art of spoken communication serves as an element for professional success, fostering a dynamic and influential presence in various professional and social arenas.

3. *Reading* :

Mastering reading skills is essential for comprehending diverse texts, deciphering their context, and drawing insightful inferences. These skills play a pivotal role in

elevating overall literacy proficiency, contributing to the enrichment of one's vocabulary, expressive capabilities, analytical prowess, and communication finesse. Delving into various text forms with precision, including letters, messages, notes, memos, emails, and reports, serves as a strategic approach to thwarting miscommunication in both personal and professional relationships. The art of attentive and focused reading not only aids in the effective interpretation of textual meaning but also facilitates the long-term retention of information. Nurturing these skills not only expands cognitive abilities but also fortifies one's capacity to engage meaningfully with written content across a spectrum of contexts.

4. *Writing:*

Crafting written expression involves skillfully presenting thoughts in textual form, adhering to a structured framework and ensuring a seamless flow of information. Successful writing extends beyond mere transcription, demanding an adept understanding of tailoring format and tone to suit diverse target audiences. The art of selecting appropriate vocabulary, medium, and outlining strategies is instrumental in ensuring that the written content not only captivates but also effectively conveys the intended message. Grammatical precision, concise sentence construction, and thorough research stand as cornerstones for enhancing the impact of your text.

Irrespective of professional role or industry, written communication remains a ubiquitous facet, with professionals routinely engaging in the composition of emails, reports, letters, and proposals. This renders writing skills indispensable across various fields, notably in sectors such as IT, marketing, strategy, consultancy, and data analytics. Proficiency in the nuanced art of written communication empowers professionals to convey ideas persuasively and make a lasting impact on diverse audiences.

4.3 METHODS OF LANGUAGE LEARNING

Language teaching methodologies have evolved over time, reflecting changes in educational theories, cultural influences, and technological advancements. Here are some of the most prominent methods used in language teaching:

1. Grammar-Translation Method

- Focuses on translating sentences between the target language and the native language.

- Emphasizes grammar rules, vocabulary lists, and syntactic structures.
- Typically used for teaching classical languages like Latin and Greek.

Advantages:

- Helps learners understand grammatical structures.
- Provides a clear framework for language rules.

Disadvantages:

- Often neglects speaking and listening skills.
- Can be monotonous and less engaging.

2. Direct Method

- Emphasizes direct interaction in the target language without translation.
- Focuses on speaking and listening over reading and writing.
- Uses everyday vocabulary and sentences to teach grammar inductively.

Advantages:

- Promotes natural language acquisition.
- Enhances oral communication skills.

Disadvantages:

- May lack a structured approach to grammar.
- Can be challenging for beginners without a linguistic background.

3. Audio-Lingual Method

- Based on behaviorist theory, emphasizing repetitive drills and practice.
- Focuses on listening and speaking through pattern drills.
- Uses dialogues and mimicking native speakers.

Advantages:

- Reinforces correct language habits through repetition.
- Develops strong listening and pronunciation skills.

Disadvantages:

- Can become repetitive and boring.

- Neglects creative language use and critical thinking.

4. Communicative Language Teaching (CLT)

- Focuses on communication and fluency over accuracy.
- Uses real-life situations and authentic materials.
- Encourages interaction, role-plays, and group work.

Advantages:

- Develops practical language skills.
- Encourages student engagement and motivation.

Disadvantages:

- May overlook grammar and accuracy.
- Requires skilled teachers to manage diverse activities.

5. Task-Based Language Teaching (TBLT)

- Centers on completing meaningful tasks using the target language.
- Tasks can range from ordering food to solving problems collaboratively.
- Emphasizes the use of language as a tool for achieving specific goals.

Advantages:

- Enhances problem-solving and critical thinking skills.
- Makes learning relevant and engaging.

Disadvantages:

- May lack focus on grammar and linguistic accuracy.
- Can be difficult to design effective tasks for all levels.

6. Total Physical Response (TPR)

- Integrates physical movement with language learning.
- Teachers give commands in the target language, and students respond with actions.
- Effective for teaching vocabulary and imperative forms.

Advantages:

- Engages kinesthetic learners.
- Reduces learner anxiety through active participation.

Disadvantages:

- Limited to teaching specific language structures.
- Less effective for advanced language proficiency.

7. The Silent Way

- Emphasizes learner autonomy and discovery.
- Teachers remain mostly silent, using visual aids and gestures to guide learning.
- Focuses on pronunciation, structure, and problem-solving.

Advantages:

- Encourages active learning and self-correction.
- Develops strong analytical and cognitive skills.

Disadvantages:

- Can be intimidating for some learners.
- Requires significant preparation and expertise from teachers.

CHECK YOUR PROGRESS

- a. What are the four basic language skills for effective communication?**
- b. What does active listening involve?**
- c. Why is active listening important in communication?**
- d. What are some benefits of active listening?**
- e. What does effective speaking require besides linguistic proficiency?**
- f. Why are speaking skills important in professional settings?**
- g. How does mastering reading skills benefit communication?**
- h. What role does writing play in effective communication?**
- i. Why is writing important across various professional fields?**

- j. What is the Grammar-Translation Method in language learning?**
- k. What are the advantages of the Grammar-Translation Method?**
- l. What are the disadvantages of the Grammar-Translation Method?**
- m. What does the Direct Method emphasize in language learning?**
- n. What are the advantages of the Direct Method?**
- o. What are the disadvantages of the Direct Method?**
- p. What is the Audio-Lingual Method based on?**
- q. What are the advantages of the Audio-Lingual Method?**
- r. What are the disadvantages of the Audio-Lingual Method?**
- s. What is the focus of Communicative Language Teaching (CLT)?**
- t. What are the advantages of Communicative Language Teaching (CLT)?**

8. Community Language Learning (CLL)

- Focuses on building a supportive community of learners.
- Uses counseling techniques to reduce anxiety and encourage communication.
- Students collaborate to create dialogues and learning experiences.

Advantages:

- Reduces learner anxiety and builds confidence.
- Promotes cooperative learning and social interaction.

Disadvantages:

- Can be time-consuming and less structured.
- Requires skilled facilitation to maintain a supportive environment.

9. Content and Language Integrated Learning (CLIL)

- Integrates language learning with subject matter content.
- Used in bilingual education and immersion programs.
- Students learn a subject (e.g., science) through the medium of a foreign language.

Advantages:

- Enhances both language and subject matter knowledge.
- Provides a real-world context for language use.

Disadvantages:

- Requires teachers proficient in both language and content.
- Can be challenging for students with lower language proficiency.

The effectiveness of each method depends on various factors, including the learners' needs, the teaching context, and the available resources. Modern language teaching often incorporates a blend of these methods to provide a comprehensive and engaging learning experience.

4.4 LET US SUM UP

In this unit, learners have been able to learn about Effective communication which relies on a set of language skills that enable individuals to express their thoughts clearly and engage in meaningful interactions. These skills—reading, writing, listening, and speaking—form the foundation of basic language proficiency and are often used in combination to convey information with structure and relevance. The choice of specific skills depends on various factors, such as the urgency of the message, the intended audience size, and the formality of the communication. The interplay of these language skills allows individuals to navigate diverse communicative scenarios with precision and efficacy.

4.5 FURTHER READING

- Lorena Manaj Sadiku. “The Importance of Four Skills Reading, Speaking, Writing, Listening in a Lesson Hour”. *European Journal of Language and Literature Studies*. Vol. 1, No. 1, 2015.
- Abdel-Rahman Al-Eiadeh¹, Dr. Mahmoud A. Al. Sobh², Dr.Samer M. Al- Zoubi³, Dr.Fadi Al-Khasawneh⁴. “Improving English Language Speaking Skills of Ajloun National University Students”. *International Journal of English and Education*. Vol. 5, Issue. 3, 2016

- Carter, Ronald & Nunan, David. (2001). The Cambridge guide to teaching English to speakers of other languages. Cambridge University Press.
- Davies, Paul & Pearse, Eric. (2000). Success in English teaching: Vol. Oxford handbooks for language teachers. Oxford University Press.

4.6 ANSWERS TO CHECK YOUR PROGRESS

- a. Reading, writing, listening, and speaking.
- b. Understanding, interpretation, and analysis of a speaker's message.
- c. It enhances clarity, facilitates appropriate responses, and avoids misunderstandings.
- d. Engaging with the speaker aids in information retention and concentration.
- e. Confidence, passion, and the art of storytelling.
- f. They propel career advancement and enhance interpersonal relationships.
- g. They help in comprehending texts, expanding vocabulary, and improving analytical skills.
- h. It involves presenting thoughts in textual form, ensuring a structured flow of information.
- i. Professionals engage in composing emails, reports, letters, and proposals.
- j. It focuses on translating sentences and emphasizes grammar rules.
- k. It helps learners understand grammatical structures and provides a clear framework for language rules.
- l. It often neglects speaking and listening skills and can be monotonous.
- m. Direct interaction in the target language without translation.
- n. Promotes natural language acquisition and enhances oral communication skills.
- o. May lack a structured approach to grammar and can be challenging for beginners.
- p. Behaviorist theory, emphasizing repetitive drills and practice.
- q. Reinforces correct language habits and develops listening and pronunciation skills.

- r. Can become repetitive and boring, neglects creative language use and critical thinking.
- s. Communication and fluency over accuracy.
- t. Develops practical language skills and encourages student engagement.

4.7 MODEL QUESTIONS

1. How do the four basic language skills interact to facilitate effective communication, and how does the selection of specific skills vary according to factors such as the urgency of the message, the intended audience size, and the formality of the communication?
2. In what ways does active listening enhance the communication process, and what are the extended benefits of attentive listening beyond the immediate conversation?
3. Examine the role of speaking skills in professional settings, highlighting the attributes that contribute to effective verbal expression, such as clarity, fluency, confidence, passion, and storytelling. How does proficiency in speaking influence career advancement, meeting contributions, and interpersonal relationships?
4. Compare and contrast at least three prominent methods, such as the Grammar-Translation Method, the Direct Method, and Communicative Language Teaching (CLT). Discuss their advantages and disadvantages.