

First year linguistics (to group 1,2,3,4,5,6)

Teacher N.khiredine

Dear students,

Given the present situation caused by the covid-19, your lessons reach you as PDFs.

Avail of your remaining indoors to prove your skills in all the subjects .It is God given opportunity to you .I trust you are intelligent enough to study in accordance with your classroom time- table .It is the best way to save yourselves the sight of cumbersome PDFs.

Be strong

Be safe

Do not dawdle away your time

‘TIME WASTING IS THE COSTLIEST EXPENSE ‘.

**BYE FOR NOW, I will teach you more
in due course.**

N.khiredine

Semester one: it was covered in the classroom in ample details+ supported with articles and book references.

Linguistics: A research which has a perennial, perfectible but not yet a conclusive course

Introduction:

Linguistics is the result of many centuries of continuous and continued research. The trail of this research encompasses the findings of three successive phases (traditional ,structural and generative). Each phase is marked by a number of eminent scholars and their great contributions.

1.The traditional phase (the phase of historicism).

It began in antiquity and lasted until late 19th century .It made the inception of the subject known today as linguistics.

a-The philosophical speculation.

b-The development of rhetoric and etymology.

c-The discovery of grammar .

d-Comparative philology.

e-The pre-structural period:

Prescriptive/descriptive grammar(the beginning of the structural phase)

These were the different modes through which language research developed .

R.H.ROBINS (1967) A SHORT HISTORY OF LINGUISTICS

(Available in Ihadj lakhdar library)

THE HISTORY OF LINGUISTICS IN EUROPE FROM PLATO TO 1600 (MARCO OJA)BY VIVIEN LAW 2003 –on the web

2.The outcomes of Historicism

To study human language ,we need to know first **its characteristics**.

The Greek philosophers were to the fore in identifying the universal characteristics of human language :

- 1-Human language is onomatopoeic(echoic+iconic)
- 2- Human language is conventional.
- 3- Human language is arbitrary.
- 4- Human language is creative.
- 5- Human language is mental.
- 6- Human language is grammatical and rule governed.
- 7- Human language is social and communicative.

The ancient list of language universals was extended by the 20th century linguist Charles Hockett (1960),six unique traits of human language the so-called **Hockett Design Features** :1-duality 2-displacement 3-productivity 4-cultural transmission 5-reflexivity 6-arbitrariness.

They are what makes our language flexible,eclectic and malleable.

3. What is language?

- a-A distinction between **language** and **a language**
- b- A distinction between **natural** and **artificial** language
- c- A distinction between **human** and **animal** language

Conclusion :Human language is both genetic and environmental(a fact corroborated by more language characteristics:**learnability, interchangeability +reciprocity** and **discreteness**. Another evidence is given on page 19 of R.L.TRASK (1995) LANGUAGE,THE BASICS :The role +position of the **epiglottis** in humans and chimpanzees .

Available for downloading :Victoria Fromkin (2003)An introduction to language

Robert Rodman

9thedition

Nina Hymns

The Critical Period Hypothesis:w.Penfield+Iamar.Roberts(1959)and Eric lenneberg(1967)

Before the holidays, we reached the concluding chapter to semester one : OTHER CONTRIBUTIONS OF THE PHASE OF HISTORICISM. This same chapter previewed the nature of language research progress made in the decades that followed the traditional phase and which is the subject matter of semester two.

4 : OTHER CONTRIBUTIONS OF THE PHASE OF HISTORICISM

a-The contribution of the BELL FAMILY (grand father, father and son) They were credited to be the first to give the impetus to the field of phonetics and make language research straddle with one foot in the humanities and the other making a vigorous stride ahead in the sciences. Such a remarkable contribution impressed highly the phonetician HENRY SWEET describing it in these words: BELL has in this work (visible speech) done more for phonetics than all his predecessors put together (page 177, APR HAWATT 1984)

-The Bells considered language as a **wave form** happening as :

1-an articulatory activity

2-an acoustic activity

3-an auditory activity

- Melville Bell published his **visible speech, the science of universal alphabets in 1867**. They were 34 symbols by which he could describe the manner of production of the sounds of nearly all known languages. These symbols were to become the direct ancestor to the **international phonetic alphabet** (IPA) 1888 in use today.

-Alexander G. Bell (young Alec) the inventor of the telephone sent the human voice over an electrical wire (i.e) air waves were replaced by electrical waves (acoustic + auditory phonetics).

Put shortly, the Bells understood the nature of the human sound .

b-Prescriptive/descriptive research

-The aim of prescriptive grammar was to teach people how to speak their language to preserve it from changing in the course of time (it prescribed rules of correct usage)

-The aim of descriptive grammar was to describe objectively how people did actually speak their language (it made no attempt to evaluate correctness)

⇒ Prescriptive grammar was severely criticized .It was found disruptive to the whole process of language research and it could obfuscate its aim.

All these developments occurred in the post –renaissance period referred to by the age of reason.

Read on the web:Review:linguistics, an introduction

William Mc Gregor

Clear language clear mind

⇒ Descriptive grammar gained continuous success.It found great support and reinforcement in the work of the SWISS FERDINAND DE SAUSSURE most particularly **synchronic/diachronic** dichotomy.

Saussure likened the language system to a game of chess(language and chess game analogy) Each element in a language like each piece of chess has **a value** only in terms of **the rules** under which it operates **and in relation to other elements** in the language system (or pieces on the board of the game of chess e.g the rook and the knight's limits+freedom of movement)

Conclusion

Saussure's work prompted the beginning of modern linguistics.It inaugurated the movement known today as STRUCTURALISM dominating the early phase of the 20th century until the mid-sixties which marked the emergence of a new grammar TGG (transformational generative grammar) propounded by NOAM CHOMSKY.Saussure's work led to the foundation of the early schools of linguistics :1-The American school(under the guidance of Leonard Bloomfield)2-the Prague school(N.Trubetzkoy+R.Jacobson)3-the Copenhagen school(L.Hjelmslev)4-The London school(J.Firth)and more .

Since this time (early20th century)language study has been ascertained by the fact that all languages no matter how simple or complex they are ,they consist of the same aspects(the aspect of sound ,of grammar and of meaning)and each language functions with rules proper to it .This was emphasized in the work of W.Von.Humboldt:**Structural differences between languages** addressing the structural diversity and its relation to thought and experience .

Briefly microlinguistics has the task of revealing all about those aspects(sound,grammar and meaning)in individual languages.

DATE 12 MARCH 2020: Classroom lectures were interrupted at this point .

I cared to go tersely through the above developments of the course (from **Semester 1**to **Semester2**)to allow the students who skived off lectures repeatedly to find their way .

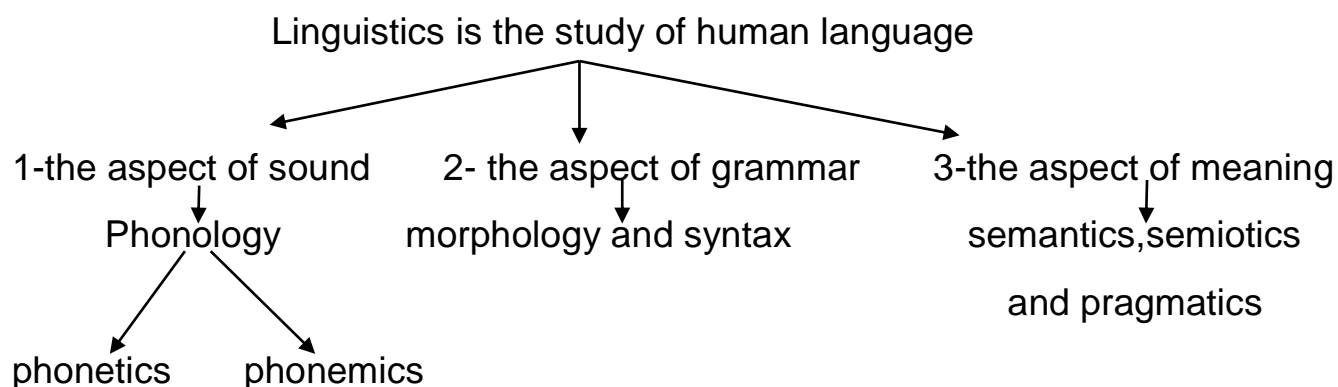
5- THE BEGINNING OF STRUCTURALISM

(The structural phase)

The early decades of the 20th century witnessed a microlinguistic description of human languages. **Microlinguistics** 'aim is limited. It is concerned with studying a language **itself** and **for itself** (J. Lyons 1981) It examines and describes a language from the smallest element to the largest (the sounds, their combinations in prepositions, conjunctions, adverbs, nouns.....etc) i.e from the minimal unit (the phoneme) to the maximal unit of language (the sentence)

Macrolinguistics has a broader aim. It relates the study of language to other subjects for their mutual interests for example linguistics and sociology, the result of which new disciplines were created eg: Sociolinguistics,,,

Psycholinguistics. Bilingualistics.... Etc



Human language can be spoken and written .

Spoken language is a system of vocal symbols. The study of how these symbols are made+produced and how they are used+interpreted in a language is the concern of phonology .

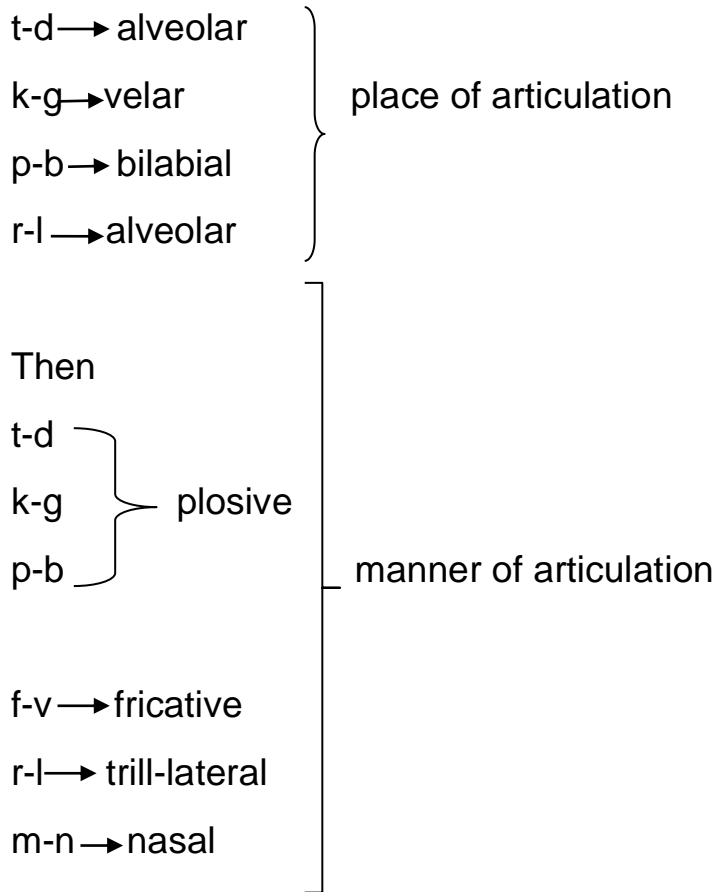
A-Phonology

It is the study of speech sounds which make the sound system of a particular language eg: French, Arabic, Russian.....etc It describes the sounds with respect to phonetics and phonemics.

a-Phonetics :

A speech sound may be a phone or a phoneme. A phone is a speech sound as it is actually made. A phone is the concern of phonetics. It describes the precise making of sounds with regard to the participation position and movement of different elements of the vocal tract (lips, uvula, tongue, velum, teeth.....etc), the tension and vibration of the vocal cords and the force of aspiration of breath

from the lungs. These details enable it to determine the place and manner of the articulation of sounds. Here are some examples (you are taught these in your course of phonetics) :



p-k-f-t-h=ح-s → voiceless+fortis (the vocal cords do not vibrate+the air is released in big puffs)

b-g-v-d-h=ه-z-m-n → voiced+lenis (the vocal cords vibrate+the air is released in little puffs).

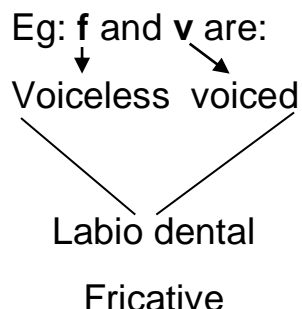
Phonetics is the science of human speech sounds. It studies the defining characteristics of all human noise and sounds regardless to which language they belong. It describes sounds with respect to :

-The study of the vocal organs through the use of which the sounds are made. This is the concern of **articulatory phonetics**.

-The study of the sound wave or the physical way in which the sounds are carried or transmitted through the air from one person to another. This is the concern of **acoustic phonetics**.

-The study of the way in which human beings perceive sounds through the mechanism of hearing (the ear) .This is the concern of **auditory phonetics**.

Briefly ,phonetics describes how humans **make** sounds and how they **hear** them (how they are made and produced) Phonetics does not interfere with how sounds function= (how they are used and interpreted in particular languages)



phonetics provides us
With these details only
its role stops here.

f and **v** are contrastive sounds in French **fin –vin**.

The absence of /**v**/ in Arabic and how a speaker of this language decides to say words like valise and vacances is the task of a phonemicist .The details are provided by phonemics (faliza-facances-كوفيد-covid)

b-Phonemics

It is the study of phonemes .What is a phoneme and how different is it from a phone?

A phoneme is an extremely important discovery in linguistics.Some call it the atom of language .The concept of the phoneme was first proposed by the Russian-Polish J.Beaudoin de Courtenay in the early 19th century.Then his student N.Trubetzkoy developed principles to identify the phoneme.Both Trubetzkoy and R.Jacobson (former members of the Prague linguistics circle) defined the phoneme in terms of **phonetic similarity** and **phonetic distribution** or **distinction**

A phoneme is the **minimal** unit of **meaningful** or **contrastive** sound within a particular language system.

Minimal=the smallest phonological element in a language system.

Meaningful=a sound is not meaningful in isolation (eg b,m,s it can not stand by itself) It is not a carrier of meaning but it is a marker of meaning (it distinguishes between meanings like sin -tin and call-falletc because/ s / and/ t / are contrastive sounds like / k / and / f / in call and fall .

The best way to test for phonemic contrast is to set up minimal pairs of words different in meaning but identical in form except for one sound like:

(grain-train)(cat-rat)(hat-mat)(hit-sit)(bit-pit)(brain-drain)etc
g-t k-r h-m h-s b-p b-d

In each pair ,the initial sounds are contrastive. Substituting one sound for another affects meaning eg: g- for – t in grain and train .

To expose the idea of phonemic contrast, the phonemicist resorts to:

1-Minimal pair test : it is a technique which establishes which sound in a language makes a difference and which does not. The sound which affects meaning is an important one eg:(grain-train)-(pell-mell)-(hell-well)-(cell-bell)-(sell-yell)-(pin-win)-(kin-sin)....etc

2-functional contrast :in the examples above /g/ and /t / ,/p/ and /m/ ,/h/ and /w/ ,/s/ and /b/ ,/s/ and /y/,/p/ and /w/ ,/k/ and /s/ all are contrastive sounds they distinguished between meanings .So they are in functional contrast.They are true phonemes.

When sounds do not contrast they do not affect meaning.They can be either in complementary distribution or in free variation.

3-complementary distribution:it is the mutual exclusiveness of a pair of sounds in a **certain** phonetic context(environment) eg: phonetic contexts involving dark /clear **L** ,aspiration nasality,voice,length,glottalization...etc

English has one phoneme **L**:alveolar-lateral-voiced(lenis).It contrasts with /b/ in (late-bate),with /d/ in (late-date),with /f/ in(late-fate).....etc in gate,mate,rate ,sate pate, ⇨ **L** and b ,**L** and d.....etc are in functional contrast.

Now **L** has two variants a dark **L** and a clear **L** . Each occurs in a different context that is its own and it excludes the other and vice versa (mutual exclusiveness) : **clear L** → initial followed by vowels

Lip ,lea ,learn ,lime ,listen ,lap, last,etc

Dark L is final or followed by consonants eg: eel ,ill, fill ,battles, ball, alms, settle....etc ⇨ **clear L** and **dark L** are in complementary distribution.They are **allophones** (variants of the phoneme **L**) they are the result of different phonetic contexts.They do not affect meaning.

In Russian clear L and dark L are not allophones .they are true phonemes (in functional contrast) they distinguish between Russian words onion (with dark L) and hatch (with clear)

Spanish and Italian have two **L** phonemes one **palatal** the other **alveolar** in functional contrast eg: in calle (street) and miglio (mile) (p227,o'connor).

Another phonetic context involves **aspiration** which accompanies some sounds as opposed to others .English plosive sounds /b-d-g/ are not aspirated eg: bed, bank, boss ,dog ,dine ,duck ,give, game, goal.....etc

./p-t-k/ are aspirated eg: paper ,page ,tail ,take ,cake, cool....etc. But they lose their aspiration (**h sounding effect**) when preceded by **s** eg: peak(p is aspirated) and speak (p is not aspirated because it is preceded by s)

Tick (t is aspirated) and stick (t is not aspirated because it is preceded by s)

Care(k is aspirated) and scare (k is not aspirated because it is preceded by s)

/p-t-k/ also lose their aspiration when they are followed by L- R-W-Y

eg: **please**(p is not aspirated ,it is followed by L)

prince (p is not aspirated ,it is followed by R)

pueblo(p is not aspirated ,it is followed by w :pronounced pweblo)

pure(p is not aspirated ,it is followed by u : pronounced pyur)

Tlin-git (t is not aspirated ,it is followed by L)

Trust-twin-tune-clean-crime-quiz-cue-

⇒ Aspirated/p-t-k/and unaspirated /p-t-k/ are in complementary distribution like kin /k/ is initial : aspirated

Skin /k/ is preceded by s: unaspirated **or** followed by L as in **clean** /k/:
unaspirated

So aspirated /p-t-k/ and unaspirated /p-t-k/ are allophones of the phonemes /p- /t/ and /k/.

Aspiration in Chinese is important. It is used as a characteristic of classes of sounds eg: **to** (unaspirated) = **many** and **to** (aspirated)=take off

So in Chinese aspiration produces different meanings which is not the same in English .

Another phonetic context involves **voice** .The French phoneme /R/ has two variants :/ R = غ / like in rouge and /R=خ / like in frais

voiced context	{	vrai-Ordre-sortir	frein-travail-trait	}	voiceless context
		bras-Raison-sabre	train-craie-trop		
		art –Arme-robuste	preuve-trou-prix		

/r=غ/ and /r=خ/ are in complementary distribution .They are allophones of the phoneme /R/ in French .

/خ/ and /غ/ in Arabic are true phonemes .They are in functional contrast (contrastive sounds) eg غاب and خاب ,

غرق and خرق

خيمة and غيمة

In view of all the examples above we deduce that languages share the same phones but each language uses them with phonetic principles proper to it

(A.C.Gimson (1983) ch9).

In a language ,certain distinctions matter (they are significant) and others do not. But those which are significant for one may not be so in another .

Observe the following distinctions in Arabic :

صا, سار /ص - /س/ →

طين , تين /ط - /ت/ →

ذاع , ضاع /ذ - /ض/ →

These pairs of phonemes are in functional contrast in Arabic. They are not important in English eg : / s=ص / in sore –soil-sight-salt-

/s=س / in sail-soul-sick-sea

/t=ت / in take-tin-tease-train

/t=ط / in tart-time-tub-tower

4-Free Variation :Speech sounds that are in functional contrast or in complementary distribution in one language may be in **free variation** in another eg: dole=may fall and do?le =just fell ⇔ in American Indian the glottal stop (?in dole) makes meaning different .

In Arabic the glottal stop/?/ and/ t / are in functional contrast as in **أمر, تمر**

In English / ?/ and/ t / are in free variation in words like tha? Bloke

Ho? Weather

A bo?le of milk

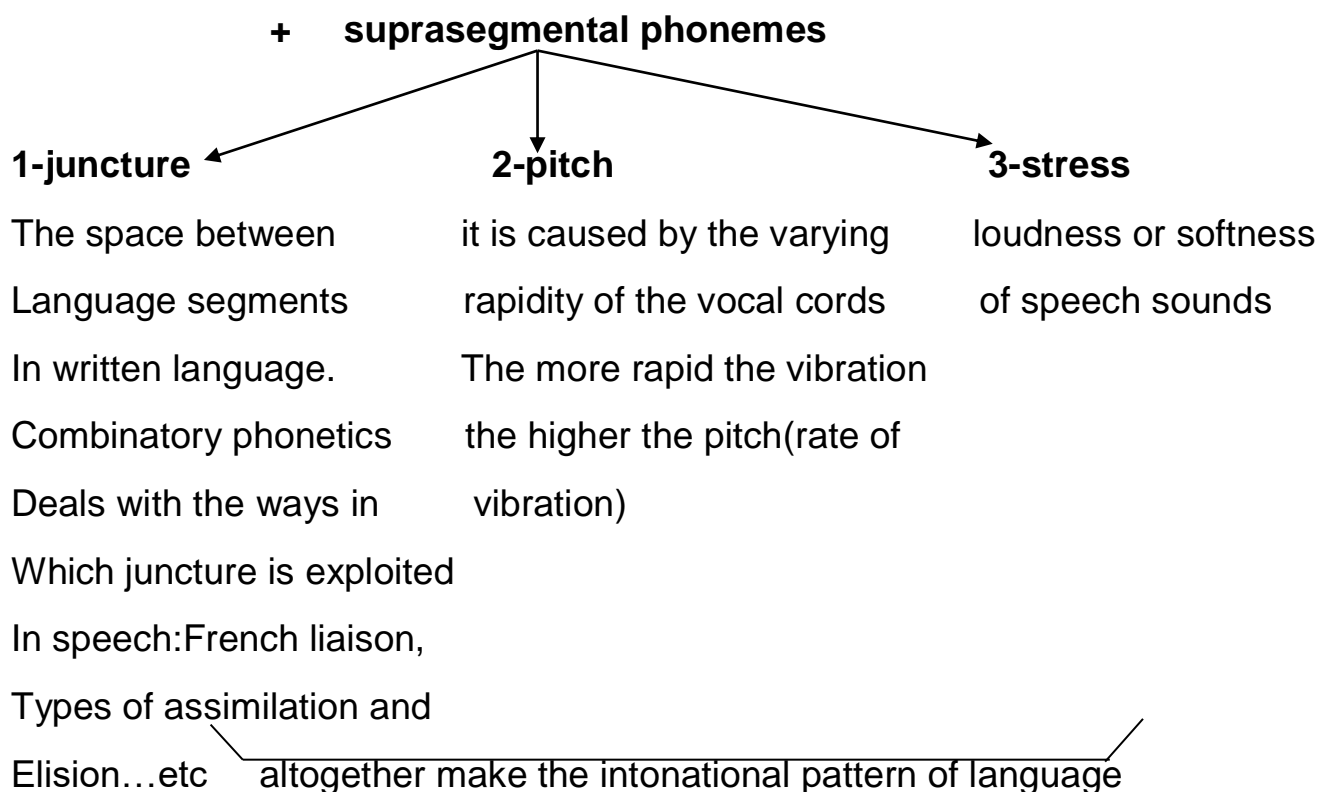
Free variation follows no rules. It is practised freely. It is a social variable of a phonemic type similar to a third /R/= /ر / used in some regions in France eg: rare (رار pronounced) lire (لير) riche (ريش) stricte (سترىكت) and all the words containing R sound.

/ق / in Algerian Arabic is also used as /آ / in آل in Tlemcen , قال in algiers, كال in jijeletc (free variation sounds)

Conclusion

We end our lesson of phonology stressing the fact that the phonemics of one language cannot be generalized into the study of another language. Languages differ considerably in organizing and distributing their phones. (motivating phonetic principles + sequential constraints covered under **systematic / autonomous phonemics**).

Phonology is also concerned with describing connected speech (long linked segments of sounds)=**segmental phonemes**



All human languages make use of pulmonic air stream mechanism (lung air): **egressive air stream**. A few of them use also mouth air mechanism: **ingressive air stream** to make tut tut and click sounds eg: Bantu languages (Niger, Congo ..and so on) and south African **Xhosa**, the language itself begins with a click X+hosa

In Algeria a click is used by children generally .when a child nods his head and makes a click he means yes he gets quickly scolded by an adult :Do you **gee up** a donkey to move faster or what ? Say **نعم**

لینعم الله علينا جميعا بالصحة و العافية

Who knows ? Perhaps we will take our next course **Morphology** in the classrooms of fesdis.

USEFUL BOOKS FOR DOWNLOADING :

- J.D.O'connor (1973) Phonetics
- P.Roach(1983) English phonetics and phonology
- J.Lyons(1981)language and linguistics
An introduction
- G.Finch (2003)How to study linguistics