

Linguistics: from the science of human language to its disciplines and applications

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Received: 23 October 2024; **Accepted:** 25 December 2024; **Published:** 27 January 2025

Abstract: Linguistics is the science that studies human language in all its forms, focusing on the structure, evolution, and functions of languages. This article provides an overview of the various branches of linguistics, such as phonetics, phonology, lexicology, grammar (morphology and syntax), semantics, pragmatics, as well as more specialized fields like cognitive linguistics, paralinguistics, and psycholinguistics. It also discusses the historical developments of the discipline, including the emergence of major linguistic schools and the development of applied linguistics in the 20th century, influenced by technological advances. Finally, it describes several sub-disciplines, such as comparative linguistics, linguistic typology, and dialectology, which allow for the analysis of languages through different synchronic and diachronic perspectives. This analysis highlights the importance of linguistics in understanding language and human communication across time and space.

Keywords: Linguistics, Human Language, Communication, Language Science, Linguistic Typology, Linguistic Universals.

Introduction: The Grand Encyclopedic Dictionary of Linguistics provides the following definition of the science of linguistics: "Linguistics is the science of human natural language in general and of all the world's languages as individual representatives".

Linguistics, in a broad sense, is concerned with the understanding of language and the communication of this knowledge to others for practical purposes. It is interesting to note that the term "Linguistics" was first used in the scientific field in 1847, while the word "linguist" (in the sense of "student of language") dates back two centuries earlier.

Linguistics itself began to be formalized as a distinct science only in the XVII and XVIII centuries, due to its great complexity and the lack of knowledge about the language-object of this science.

In the XIX and XX centuries, there was an expansion of research in the field of linguistics; there were famous linguistic schools (in America, Prague, Copenhagen, Moscow, etc.). Ferdinand de Saussure made a huge contribution to the theory of linguistics, which developed the foundations of structuralism or structural linguistics, and advanced the theory of language and speech.

The practical orientation, now called "Applied Linguistics," began to develop actively in the mid-XX century in connection with the advent of computer technology and the improvement of technical means.

The history of linguistics as a science, as well as the history of different linguistic schools and the stages of the evolution of linguistic theories, will be analyzed in depth in the course "History of Linguistic Teachings."

Linguistics studies the different aspects of language, considering them within its distinct scientific domains. For example, phonetics and phonology are sub-disciplines of linguistics that focus on the study of the sound system of language and its functional characteristics.

Lexicology studies the composition of a language's vocabulary and patterns of its development. Grammar, as the science of methods and means of constructing and modifying words, as well as methods and means of constructing sentences, is divided into two areas: morphology and syntax. Morphology is the doctrine of methods and means of constructing and modifying words. Syntax is the doctrine of methods and means of constructing sentences. Semantics is the science of the meaning of words and sentences, parts of speech, and

sentence constituents. Pragmatics examines the conditions and objectives of communication that affect understanding, which is called "language learning in context," the study of the relationships between language means and those who use these means.

Discourse studies and analyzes the characteristics of vocabulary, syntax, semantics, or pragmatics of linguistic units, which manifest in actual communication acts, speech, and written texts (e.g., sports discourse).

General Linguistics deals with issues concerning all languages, studying the essence and nature of language in general, the problem of its origin, and the general laws of its functioning, as well as the structure and classification of languages.

General linguistics develops methods for studying languages, formulates linguistic universals, that is, dispositions applicable to most or all languages of the world.

Private Linguistics studies one or more related languages (e.g., Germanic, Turkic, Balkan, etc.).

Depending on the goals and objectives of the study, private linguistics can be approached from a synchronic perspective, describing the language at a particular moment in history, often its modern state, or from a diachronic perspective, which traces the historical development of the language.

Historical Comparative Linguistics focuses on evaluating the degree of relatedness between languages, constructing genealogical classifications, reconstructing ancient languages or proto-languages, and studying various historical processes affecting languages, their groups and families, as well as the etymology of words.

Typology is concerned with identifying the most common patterns across different languages, regardless of a common origin or reciprocal influence. When a phenomenon is observed in a representative group of languages, it can be considered a typological pattern applicable to those languages.

Typological analysis can be conducted at the level of sounds (phonetic typology), words (morphological typology), sentences (syntactic typology), and beyond (text or discourse typology).

Dialectology, on the other hand, examines the territorial local varieties of a language.

Cognitive Linguistics is an interdisciplinary direction in linguistics, closely related to semantics, that explores issues of the relationship between language, consciousness, and thought, the role of language in cognition, and the understanding and reflection of the surrounding reality.

Paralinguistics studies non-linguistic (non-verbal) means in discourse, conveying verbal semantic information within the framework of the verbal message, as well as the entire set of these means. The study of non-verbal communication is an important element of intercultural communication.

Paralinguistics is also considered a branch of non-verbal semiotics.

Psycholinguistics is associated with the study of speech, the formation of speech (most often of an individual). Psycholinguistics is an independent scientific field that emerged at the intersection of linguistics and psychology. It is the study of the psychological aspects of linguistic phenomena.

The combination of these two disciplines into one allows for the use of the conceptual apparatus of linguistics to describe the linguistic form of speech and the conceptual apparatus of psychology to describe and explain the mental processes of speech production and perception.

Within psycholinguistics, for example, children's speech and speech deviations in mental illnesses are studied.

Sociolinguistics examines the role of language within society, as well as its influence on language. It focuses on language in relation to the social conditions of its existence and the external factors that influence its use and development, including the speech community, the social structure of that community, and variations among native speakers. Political linguistics, for example, develops actively within sociolinguistics.

Applied Linguistics: This field includes practical domains of linguistics, often interdisciplinary, such as computational linguistics (machine translation, linguistic databases in computing, information retrieval, etc.), language learning, cryptography (the study of texts in an unknown code or language to extract information), and mathematical linguistics (for example, quantitative linguistics, which performs statistical analysis).

Each new stage in the development of the science of language has its own characteristics, as new aspects and methods of language learning emerge. New schools and branches are developed. One such section of linguistics is considered linguistic typology. It is widespread in various countries.

Linguistic typology is a section of linguistics devoted to elucidating the most common patterns among different languages, not necessarily related by a common origin or mutual influence. Typology seeks to identify the most probable phenomena in different languages.

Linguistic typology, a branch of general linguistics, focuses on identifying similarities and differences between languages regardless of their genetic relationships or reciprocal influences. It generally aims to highlight and analyze essential linguistic characteristics that are likely to influence other aspects of language structure (such as how meaningful parts of a word are combined or how a sentence is structured).

Typological studies are based on representative samples from many languages of the world; conclusions drawn from studying the sample can, with some reservations, be extended to all languages on Earth. Typology is particularly interesting for "exotic" or less-studied languages, such as those in Southeast Asia, Africa, Oceania, or among Native American languages, but the material of widely spoken, prestigious, and well-studied languages can also be subject to typological study.

Depending on the direction of study, Semasiological Typology and Onomasiological Typology are distinguished. Semasiological Typology focuses on the transition from the word to its meaning, while Onomasiological Typology moves from content to expression means.

In conclusion, it is important to emphasize that Comparative Typology aims to provide materials for the typological classification of languages and to prevent interference from the mother tongue. Various types of typological research are established based on their distinct characteristics, such as the number of languages compared, the extent of the material studied, the research objectives, types of divergences, levels of analysis, and research orientation.

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