

DALIA MASAITIENĖ

Introduction into Linguistics:  
**A Teaching Guide**

Vytauto Didžiojo universitetas  
Kaunas, 2009

Recenzentė: doc. dr. Violeta Kalėdaitė

Svarstyta Vytauto Didžiojo universiteto Anglų filologijos katedros posėdyje 2009 05 11 (protokolo Nr. 6); Humanitarinių mokslų fakulteto tarybos posėdyje 2009 06 25 (protokolo Nr. 6) ir rekomenduota išleisti elektroninę versiją.

ISBN 978-9955-12-498-6

© D. Masaitienė  
© Vytauto Didžiojo universitetas

## CONTENTS

Preface .....	4
Introduction .....	5
Principles of Modern Linguistics.....	8
Phonetics.....	12
Phonology.....	16
Morphology .....	18
Syntax .....	23
Semantics.....	27
Sociolinguistics.....	32
Glossary.....	41
References .....	47

## PREFACE

This teaching aid has grown out from the course **Introduction into English Linguistics** which I have been teaching at Vytautas Magnus University for a number of years. Its aim is to present students with a concise and up-to-date discussion of some of the main topics that modern linguistics addresses. The teaching guide is provided with exercises for each topic (graded from less difficult to advanced), and questions for discussion. All the exercises have been tested in class. The teaching guide also includes a glossary of the most important terms which students have to know and be able to use not only in this course but also in the other linguistic courses that they take in the programme of English Philology.

*Dalia Masaitienė*

## INTRODUCTION

**Linguistics** is the scientific study of language. Human language, understood as a systematic use of speech sounds, signs, and written symbols for communication among people, is a very complicated system, which can be analysed on different levels and from various points of view. Modern linguists often adopt different perspectives on language depending on the goals of their research. It is common to distinguish between language as an individual act of speaking or writing in a particular context at a given moment or in a certain social context, and language as the abstract linguistic system underlying the linguistic behaviour of a whole community of speakers. In addition, a number of separate, though often closely interrelated, branches of linguistics can be distinguished.

**General or theoretical linguistics** tries to determine universal principles for studying languages and to describe the general features of language.

**Contrastive linguistics** concentrates upon the differences between languages. Its findings are often applied in the context of language teaching.

**Comparative linguistics** studies different languages looking for similar characteristics. These languages may have common historical origin though the main emphasis of the analysis is usually placed on the structural correspondences between languages under investigation.

**Historical linguistics** analyses the development of language in time, registering the changes that have taken place in it.

**Applied linguistics** is concerned with the application of linguistic theories and their findings in solving various language problem, mostly in the teaching of foreign languages, studying language disorders, in translation, lexicography, and stylistics.

**Sociolinguistics** studies the relationship between language and society, taking into consideration standard and non-standard forms of language, regional and social varieties with reference to such concepts as ethnicity, social status, sex, age, etc.

**Psycholinguistics** is a branch of linguistics which studies the relationship between linguistic behaviour and the mental processes. It is interested in how mental processes influence the production and perception of speech.

**Computational linguistics** uses computer techniques and applies them in automatic translation and speech analysis using corpora for large-scale statistical investigation and computational processing of spoken and written texts.

**Developmental linguistics** is concerned with the study of the acquisition of language by children, describing the stages and patterns of development and explaining the typical features and variations.

**Anthropological linguistics** studies language variation and usage in relation to culture. Emphasis is often placed on the analysis of the so-called non-Western languages.

The above-mentioned branches do not exhaust all the approaches to language that can be distinguished in modern linguistics, which is a vigorously developing science.

### **Features Common to All Languages**

There are a lot of questions that can be asked about language, some scientific, some not. One such question is: Which is the oldest language in the world? Several centuries ago, researchers were much concerned with this question, however, it does not have a reliable answer, simply because we cannot go so far into the history of humanity.

Another often asked question is about the features that all natural human languages share. The American linguist Charles Hockett has pointed out a number of such properties. Here are some of them:

- a) all languages have vowels and consonants;
- b) all languages have words;
- c) all languages can create new words when required and modify their meanings;
- d) all languages are open-ended in the sense that they can produce totally new utterances which are understood by the users of the language;
- e) all languages can form questions;
- f) in all languages it is possible to talk about things and situations that are removed from the immediate situation of the speaker (this is called **displacement**);
- g) in all languages we can use hypothetical, unreal, and fictional utterances.

Thus, as we can see, human linguistic knowledge involves numerous different aspects. People are able to produce sounds and to understand the sounds produced by others, and those sequences of sounds signify meanings. The relation between the linguistic form (written or spoken word or expression) and meaning is arbitrary, i.e. there is no direct physical correspondence between a linguistic expression and the entity in the world to which that expression refers. For example, there is no explicit relationship between the English word *window* and the object itself. In other languages the same concept is represented differently (e.g. *langas* in Lithuanian, *okno* in Russian, *das Fenster* in German, etc.). There are certain words in most languages whose pronunciation to some extent suggests their meaning. These are **onomatopoeic** words that imitate the sounds associated with the things, creatures or actions that they refer to. For instance, *meow* imitates the sound made by a cat, *splash* imitates the sound of liquid hitting something or being moved around quickly, *whoosh* means to move very fast with a soft rushing sound. However, even onomatopoeic words are not exact phonetic imitations of natural sounds. Therefore, their forms often differ from language to language (compare the English *bow-wow* and the Lithuanian *au-au* as imitations of dog barking).

All natural languages are creative, because they allow innovation in response to new experiences, situations, and scientific discoveries. **Creativity** is a very important feature of all natural human languages. The human creative ability in language use is not just what we choose to say at a particular moment in a particular situation but also includes our understanding of a new sentence that we have never heard before. According to Fromkin et al., the sentence “*Daniel Boone decided to become a pioneer because he dreamed of pigeon-toed giraffes and cross-eyed elephants dancing in pink skirts and green berets on the wind-swept plains of the Midwest*” will be understood by the native speakers of English. (2007: 9). Most likely, no one will believe the sentence; its logic will surely be questioned; but everyone speaking English can understand it, though it was probably never produced before. Noam Chomsky was one of the first to speak about this human ability to understand new sentences as part of the creative aspect of language use.

Another example of language creativity can be given on the lexical level. Imagine that a new substance has been created that helps to preserve food ecologically and for a long time. Imagine that this substance has been called *sperte*; then the food preserved in such a way would be

*spertical*, and the process of preservation would be called *spertcalization*. This example illustrates the possibility to create completely new words but, on the other hand, the limitations of creativity, since the derived words of the new coinage follow the already established rules of affixation in English.

Natural languages are also often **redundant**, that is, the same meaning may be signalled more than once. First of all, redundancy may be external, i.e. indicated through gestures and facial expressions. If I say: “*He is my cousin*” and at the same time point at the only man in the room, I am using external redundancy of gestures. If I say: “*I don’t like the taste of this salad*” and at the same time frown, I am indicating my dislike through both my facial expression and the use of the words “*don’t like*”. Redundancy may be internal, i.e. expressed just through language. For example, in the sentence “*John likes to check his e-mail twice a day*”, the information about the masculine gender of the agent is given in the use of the personal name and in the pronoun *his*; singularity is signalled through the subject and the verb form (*likes*) and the singular form of the pronoun *his*.

All languages are **systematic**. In other words, they consist of patterns, which recur in various combinations, and rules, which are applied to produce these patterns. Without rules, it would be impossible to learn and use languages. Every native speaker of English knows when to use the alternative forms of the indefinite article *a* or *an* and uses them without conscious effort. Similarly, a native speaker would use the form *could have been asked* but would not say *\*been have could asked* because this is also a native speaker’s intuitive knowledge of the rules in the language.

All **languages change**. Of course, they may change in different ways depending on social, political and other circumstances. Thus their histories are individual and different. English, for example, has borrowed words, especially from French and Latin, to such an extent that purely native Anglo-Saxon words hardly constitute the majority of present-day English.

### **Principles of Modern Linguistics: Structuralism**

**Structuralism** is a term used in linguistics referring to a theoretical approach to the analysis of language that describes linguistic items in

terms of structures. The basic claim of structuralism is that language is a structured system. **Ferdinand de Saussure** is known as the father of structuralism. In 1916, his *Cours de linguistique générale* (*Course in General Linguistics*) was published, where the main ideas of structuralism were formulated. He argued that each element in a language is defined by how it is related to other elements. He also formulated several principles of linguistic analysis which have become the tenets of modern linguistics. These principles are presented with short explanations below.

### **Linguistics is descriptive, not prescriptive**

It means that linguists describe the rules and facts of language exactly as they find them without making judgements. They do not try to impose norms of correctness and do not try to change the actual usage of the language of the native speakers. This contrasts with the previous view of traditional grammar which was very strongly prescriptive.

The principle of descriptiveness also reflects the present-day view about language change. Before de Saussure, it was held that linguistic change involves corruption and should be stopped. Modern linguistics states that change is a natural process. The task of a linguist is to describe the way people speak and write, not to tell them how they ought to use language.

### **Priority of the spoken language**

It is one of the main principles of modern linguistics that spoken language is more basic than written language. For a long time only written language was studied, and judgements about language on the whole were based on the results of these studies. However, spoken language is very different from written texts. There are great variations both in grammar and vocabulary choices which the written language does not reflect. Therefore, for a full understanding of language use, both spoken and written language should be studied.

### **Synchronic and diachronic description of language**

Two basic principles can be applied to the study of language: synchronic and diachronic. Diachronic linguistics is the study of languages from the viewpoint of their historical development. Synchronic linguistics studies languages at a single point of time. It may be the present-day situation or any given period in the history of language development. Both ways of describing languages are important.

### **All languages are equal**

For a linguist, all languages serve as the data for objective study. Though it was common earlier to call certain languages “primitive” (in relation to the cultural and economic development of certain societies), it was determined that every existing natural language is a highly developed system and its structure does not directly correlate with the stage of social development of that speech community.

### **Paradigmatic and syntagmatic relations of linguistic units**

A linguistic unit enters into relations of two different kinds which identify it in the language system. It enters into paradigmatic relations with all the other elements of the same level which can also be used in the same context. For example, in the phrase *a...of milk*; the missing element could be *glass, jar, mug, bottle* (all these concrete countable nouns stand in paradigmatic relationship).

A linguistic unit enters into **syntagmatic** relations with the other elements of the same level with which it occurs and which make its context. **Syntagmatic** relations for the phrase *a glass of milk* would be between *glass* and *a, of*, and *milk*.

## **Functionalism: The Prague School**

Functionalism is represented mostly by the works of the Prague School (established in 1926; the main representatives: V. Mathesius, R. Jakobson, N.Trubbetzkoy). In linguistics, functionalism is best seen as a movement continuing the tradition of Saussurean structuralism. The main claim of this approach is that language is a system of functionally related units. The phonological, grammatical, and semantic structures of a language are determined by the functions that they have to perform. The main function of language is the **communicative** one, i.e. language is used by people to communicate. Language also has the **expressive** function – to convey the speaker’s feelings and attitudes. B. Maliowski introduced the term the **phatic function**, claiming that language is often used for maintaining social relations (e.g. greetings, leave-taking, comments about the weather, etc.). The Prague School also emphasized the distinction between the phonetic and the phonological analysis of sounds, introducing the notions of **phoneme** and **distinctive feature**. Of particular importance is also their formulation of the theory of functional

sentence perspective (FSP) – a theory that analyses utterances in terms of the information they express.

### **Generativism (Generative grammar)**

The term is used to refer to the theory of language developed by Noam Chomsky. His language theory revolutionized linguistics in 1957, when his book *Syntactic Structures* was published. He draws a distinction between linguistic competence and performance. A speaker's linguistic **competence** is that part of his knowledge of the native language system which enables him to make an infinite number of sentences. Performance is linguistic behavior which is determined both by the speaker's linguistic competence and various non-linguistic factors, such as social conventions, emotional attitudes, etc. Chomsky claims that human language is innate: a child is born with a biological predisposition to learn language. This feature is species-specific, that is, it discriminates humans and other living creatures. Chomsky was amazed at how rapidly a little child acquires language. On the whole, he emphasized the role of language as a basic means to investigate the human mind.

#### **Questions and tasks:**

- 1) Some features common to all natural languages have been mentioned above. Can you think of some additional properties that unite all languages?
- 2) If a researcher decided to analyze the English language of the period when Shakespeare wrote his most famous tragedies, would it be a synchronic or diachronic linguistic analysis?
- 3) Explain how you understand prescriptiveness in linguistics. In your opinion, is it a positive or a negative approach?
- 4) Give expressions, both in English and Lithuanian, which would be examples of the phatic function of language.
- 5) Can you think of examples of utterances where the expressive function would be much more prominent than the communicative one?
- 6) How do you understand innateness of language?
- 7) Does synonymy illustrate paradigmatic or syntagmatic relations in language?

- 8) Think about your usual working day. Do you speak more or do you write more? In this connection, would you give priority to spoken or written language?
- 9) (Advanced) If someone you know says to you over a glass of wine on a Saturday evening “I love you”, how would you interpret the utterance? In other words, can the utterance have other interpretations apart from its direct meaning and how some interpretations may depend on the context of the situation?

## PHONETICS

Phonetics is the branch of linguistics which studies the characteristics of speech sounds. Since in English and some other languages there is a considerable discrepancy between spelling and sound, phonetic alphabets have been created in which one letter corresponds to one sound. The best-known and most widely used one is the **International Phonetic Alphabet (IPA)**. The phonetic transcription is given in square brackets, for example *fee* [fi:] or *daytime* [deɪtaɪm].

Phonetics is traditionally divided into **articulatory phonetics**, which studies how speech sounds are produced, **auditory phonetics**, which studies how they are perceived by the ear; it investigates the perception of pitch and loudness of sounds, and **acoustic phonetics**, which looks at the physical characteristics of speech sounds.

Individual speech sounds are called **segments**. All the speech sounds are classified into **consonants** and **vowels**. Vowels are pronounced without or with very little obstruction in the vocal tract and they make the nucleus of a **syllable**. Consonants are produced with some constriction in the airflow through the vocal tract.

According to their **place of articulation**, the English consonants are further classified into bilabial, labiodental, dental, alveolar, palatal, velar, and glottal. According to the **manner of articulation**, they are grouped into stops, fricatives, and affricates. In addition, consonants are called **oral**, if the air escapes through the mouth; the majority of consonants are oral. However, if the velum is lowered and the air escapes through the nose, a **nasal** consonant is produced (e.g. the first sound in *new* or *mouse*).

The English vowels are classified into **simple vowels** (or monophthongs) and **diphthongs**. Diphthongs show a noticeable change in

quality during their pronunciation (e.g. the vowels in *play* and *count*). The manner of the articulation of vowels depends on the position of the tongue and lips. They are grouped into high, mid, and low; front, central, and back, and rounded and unrounded. The distinction between lax and tense vowels shows that the first are produced with relatively less tension and are shorter than their tense counterparts, which show a greater vocal tract constriction. The vowel in *fit* is lax and the vowel in *feel* is tense.

Two speech sounds – [w] and [j] – are articulated with the tongue like a vowel, yet they function like voiced consonants and are called **glides** (sometimes the term semi-vowel is used).

Length, pitch, and stress are prosodic (or suprasegmental) features, which means that they exist over the segmental values of the speech sounds in a syllable. In English, the stressed syllables are louder, a bit longer and higher in pitch. Pitch change in spoken language that is related to differences in word meaning (i.e. change in pitch can show differences in word meaning) is called **tone**. However, English is not a tone language. It is **intonation** language, where the change in pitch functions on the sentence level and its movement here shows an emotional meaning (anger, joy, irony, etc.) or grammatical meaning (e.g. statements vs. questions).

### Exercise 1

How many speech sounds are there in the following words? You can use a dictionary to check your answers.

Example: cat – 3; book – 3; rattle – 4.

- |               |                 |
|---------------|-----------------|
| 1) porch      | 9) universal    |
| 2) sculptures | 10) group       |
| 3) cure       | 11) mathematics |
| 4) surgeon    | 12) word        |
| 5) argue      | 13) wrap        |
| 6) sergeant   | 14) psalmist    |
| 7) mailbox    | 15) prudential  |
| 8) starrng    | 16) snub        |

Question: What conclusion can you make about the relationship between the number of letters and the number of speech sounds in the analyzed English words?

## Exercise 2

After each of the following articulatory descriptions, write in phonetic brackets the sound described.

Example: voiced labiodental fricative – [v].

1. high back rounded lax vowel
2. voiced labiodental fricative
3. voiced palato-alveolar affricate
4. voiced palatal glide
5. voiced velar nasal
6. voiced interdental fricative
7. low front unrounded vowel
8. high front tense unrounded vowel
9. mid central lax unrounded vowel
10. mid-high front unrounded vowel

## Exercise 3

Which of the following pairs of words show the same vowel quality? Transcribe each word.

- |                   |                      |
|-------------------|----------------------|
| 1) back – bake    | 11) hide - hid       |
| 2) pool – pull    | 12) least - leave    |
| 3) school – scope | 13) grasp - grass    |
| 4) snug – snuff   | 14) howl - huff      |
| 5) cot – caught   | 15) dump - damp      |
| 6) bid – bead     | 16) fight - flight   |
| 7) soap – soak    | 17) fiend - friend   |
| 8) luck – lick    | 18) key - kick       |
| 9) late – lake    | 19) number - numeral |
| 10) fell - feel   |                      |

#### Exercise 4

Mark stresses of the following words. Note that some words have primary and secondary stress. If not sure, you can use a dictionary.

- |                 |                   |
|-----------------|-------------------|
| 1) daylight     | 9) restaurant     |
| 2) day off      | 10) responsible   |
| 3) day-to-day   | 11) shoelace      |
| 4) day training | 12) health club   |
| 5) monopolize   | 13) health centre |
| 6) kangaroo     | 14) bacteriology  |
| 7) midstream    | 15) changeover    |
| 8) midsection   | 16) prosperity    |

#### Exercise 5

Transcribe the following words, as you would pronounce them in isolation. Mark the stresses. Then check your transcription with a dictionary.

- |                   |               |
|-------------------|---------------|
| 1) political      | 7) anguish    |
| 2) development    | 8) education  |
| 3) pearl          | 9) variable   |
| 4) English        | 10) saliva    |
| 5) comprehensible | 11) component |
| 6) miniature      | 12) predator  |

#### Questions and tasks:

1. What is the role phonetic transcription? Why is it important to have a standardized phonetic alphabet like the International Phonetic Alphabet?
2. Describe the sound producing system.
3. What is the main difference in articulating voiced and voiceless speech sounds?
4. (Advanced) Diacritics are additional markings on the written symbols in phonetic transcription. Why are they necessary?

## PHONOLOGY

Phonology is the branch of linguistics that studies the patterning of speech sounds in languages. To a large extent, it is related to phonetics but has a different focus. Whereas phonetics concentrates on the physical articulatory and auditory aspects of speech sounds, phonology investigates sound types that subsume all the variations of speech sounds which we actually produce while speaking. For example, it gives explanations why the consonant cluster [ps] is not pronounced word-initially in English but is possible in Lithuanian or Russian, or why [p] is aspirated in the words like *put*, *pity*, and *rump*, but is non-aspirated in *spite*, *splash*, and *spirit*. It also concentrates on native speaker's linguistic knowledge about the sound arrangements in their language. This knowledge is mostly intuitive. Thus a native speaker of English can recognize that a form like *flib* could be a possible English word, though actually such a word does not exist. On the other hand, a native English speaker can say that a form like *ngick* is simply not possible and "does not sound English". The task of a phonologist is to give objective linguistic explanations for this phonological knowledge.

The central term in phonology is **phoneme**, which is defined as the smallest meaning distinguishing sound unit. In other words, phonemes can distinguish words with different meanings. For example, /p/ and /b/ are two separate phonemes because they can distinguish words (*pit* and *bit*; *pull* and *bull*, etc.). However, aspirated and non-aspirated [p] never distinguish words with different meanings and are just predictable variants of the same phoneme. They are said to be predictable because they occur in different environments - the non-aspirated [p] is used after [s] and the aspirated one in all other positions. Such predictable phonetic variants of a phoneme are called **allophones**.

Allophones never occur in the same phonetic environment and are, therefore, said to be in **complementary distribution**. Phonemic distinctions are checked using the minimal pair test. If a substitution of one phoneme for another results in a word with a different meaning, we have two different phonemes. Comparing the same phonemes /p/ and /b/, we may notice that they are very similar in their articulation, only /b/ is voiced and /p/ is voiceless. Such distinguishing characteristics of phonemes are called **distinctive features**. If the feature is present in a phoneme, it is marked with a plus sign and if it is absent, it is marked with a minus sign. Thus /b/ is presented as [+VOICE] and /p/ as [-VOICE].

Each phoneme in a language can be described providing a set of features for that phoneme. It is interesting to note that the inventories of phonemes are different in different languages. For example, /l/ and /r/ are allophones in Japanese, and in Russian long and short vowels do not differentiate words.

A distinction is made between phonetic and phonological transcription. Phonetic transcription is given in square brackets, [ ], and phonological transcription employs slashes, / /.

One more field of study in phonology is the possible patterning of sounds and the constraints on the sequence, ordering or position of phonemes in various languages. These possible sequential arrangements of phonological units in a language are called **phonotactics**. In English, for example, /spm-/ or /nb-/ are not possible initial phonotactic sequences.

### Exercise 1

Find minimal pairs of words that would contrast the following English phonemes:

- |              |                |
|--------------|----------------|
| 1) /f/ - /v/ | 5) /i:/ - /i/  |
| 2) /t/ - /d/ | 6) /i/ - /ai/  |
| 3) /m/ - /n/ | 7) /u:/ - /u/  |
| 4) /s/ - /z/ | 8) /au/ - /ai/ |

### Exercise 2

Which of the following words could make minimal pairs?

flesh, map, park, tool, Ben, cut, tale, knack, pale, dark, screen, dare, fleet, fresh, ban, nap, scream, cat, tail

### Questions:

1. What is the difference between an allophone and a phoneme?
2. Why is aspiration not a distinctive feature in English?

### Tasks:

1. Explain the difference between accidental and systematic gaps in the inventory of possible English words. Think of your own examples of accidental and/or systematic gaps both in English and Lithuanian.

- (Advanced) Contrasts of phonemes are language-specific. Find examples of phoneme contrasts from different languages that are not found in English.

## MORPHOLOGY

Morphology is the branch of linguistics which studies the structure of words and types of their formation. It is generally divided into **inflectional morphology** (which studies inflections of a language) and **derivational morphology** (which studies the types of word formation). **Morpheme** is the basic unit in morphology. It is defined as a minimal unit of meaning or grammatical function. Thus, the word *unlocked* in the sentence “He unlocked the door” has three morphemes (*un-* is used to show an opposite; *lock* – means to fasten with a key, and *-ed* indicates past tense). There are morphemes that can be used as single words (e.g. *book, run, nice, one*). They are called **free** morphemes. Others cannot stand alone and have to be attached to another morpheme (e. g. *un-, -ment, -ed, -s*). They are **bound** morphemes.

Words which consist only of one morpheme are called **simple words**. Words consisting of two or more morphemes are called **complex**. Complex words have a **root** and one or more **affixes** (**prefixes** or **suffixes**). The form to which an affix is added is called a **base** (or a **stem**). Thus in the word *assertiveness*, *assert* is the root and the base for *-ive* and *assertive* is the base for *-ness*).

Derivation is one of the major types of word formation. Another very productive type is **compounding** – the process of joining two or more words to form a new word; e.g. *raincoat, sky-blue, team-mate, or talking head*. As can be seen from the given examples, the spelling of compounds varies. They can be written as one word, hyphenated or written as two separate words. In the latter case they are treated as a word and not a phrase because they represent a single unit of meaning. In numerous cases the meaning of a compound can be deduced from its constituent parts (e.g. a *bookshelf* is a shelf that you keep books on; *sun-beam* is a beam of light from the sun). Such compounds are said to be transparent from the point of view of their meaning. Yet there are compounds whose meaning does not follow from the meanings of the constituent parts (e.g. *black sheep* is not a sheep but a person who is re-

garded by other members of their family as a failure; the *grass roots* are the ordinary people in an organization, rather than the leaders).

**Conversion** is a type of word formation when the function of a word changes (such as a noun to a verb or vice versa), e.g. butter (N) – butter (V); walk (V) – walk (N) or open (Adj) – open (V).

Other types of word formation in English include **clipping**, **blending**, **backformation**, **initialisms** (abbreviations and acronyms), and **onomatopoeia**. In addition, words are borrowed from other languages (which the English language has done extensively throughout its history) or totally new words can be invented. The first are called **borrowings**, e.g. the noun *chef* – “a skilled cook, especially the main cook in a restaurant” - has been borrowed from French; the noun *series* – “a number of similar things arranged in a row” – has come from Latin, and the noun *avocado* – “a type of fruit” - has come from Mexican Spanish. The newly made words, often trade names, are called **coinages**. They often become general words, e.g. *xerox*, *teflon* or *aspirin*.

### Exercise 1

Say which of the given words are simple and which are complex.

- |               |                |
|---------------|----------------|
| 1) moody      | 9) critical    |
| 2) glove      | 10) Arabic     |
| 3) engagement | 11) ambulance  |
| 4) enough     | 12) discuss    |
| 5) office     | 13) disconnect |
| 6) off-duty   | 14) handbag    |
| 7) shoulder   | 15) needful    |
| 8) teacher    | 16) seasoned   |

### Exercise 2

What parts of speech are formed with the following derivational affixes? Give an example with each affix.

- |           |          |
|-----------|----------|
| 1) – ful  | 6) in -  |
| 2) – able | 7) re -  |
| 3) – ize  | 8) ex -  |
| 4) – ly   | 9) im -  |
| 5) – en   | 10) un - |

### Exercise 3

Indicate prefixes and suffixes in the given words.

- |                     |                          |
|---------------------|--------------------------|
| 1) implant (V)      | 9) controllable (Adj)    |
| 2) verbal (Adj)     | 10) preschooler (N)      |
| 3) thoughtful (Adj) | 11) reschedule (V)       |
| 4) slowly (Adv)     | 12) thirsty (Adj)        |
| 5) co-star (N)      | 13) stuffing (N)         |
| 6) cookie(N)        | 14) disobey (V)          |
| 7) cooker (N)       | 15) underground (N)      |
| 8) cookery (N)      | 16) uncontrollable (Adj) |

### Exercise 4 (Advanced)

Draw a tree structure for the given words.

- |                   |                 |
|-------------------|-----------------|
| 1) deafen         | 6) frightened   |
| 2) reread         | 7) economically |
| 3) timeless       | 8) bumper car   |
| 4) interplanetary | 9) anybody      |
| 5) stony-faced    | 10) optionally  |

### Exercise 5

The given words can be either nouns or verbs (i.e. the process of conversion can be applied). Find out whether the change of stress can be used to make the distinction between some nouns and verbs.

- |            |             |
|------------|-------------|
| 1) work    | 7) convict  |
| 2) import  | 8) nail     |
| 3) love    | 9) play     |
| 4) retreat | 10) record  |
| 5) imprint | 11) knife   |
| 6) dust    | 12) outrage |

### Exercise 6

The following words have all been formed by compounding. Draw a tree structure for each word. The head of the compound determines the

part of speech of the word, yet it is advisable to check the given words in a dictionary.

- |                 |                |
|-----------------|----------------|
| 1) light bulb   | 6) round-up    |
| 2) hard copy    | 7) grass roots |
| 3) bitter-sweet | 8) green card  |
| 4) barking mad  | 9) stuck-up    |
| 5) round-table  | 10) shipshape  |

### Exercise 7

The words in Column B have been created from the corresponding word in Column A. Say what type of word formation has been used in each case.

#### Column A

govern  
international, police  
babysitter  
foot, step  
laboratory  
Acquired Immune  
Deficiency Syndrome  
influenza  
fruit, juice  
drama  
The National Health Service

#### Column B

government  
Interpol  
babysit  
footstep  
lab  
AIDS  
flu  
fruite  
dramatist  
NHS

### Exercise 8 (Advanced)

The following compounds are fully or partially idiomatic, i.e. their meanings are not easily understood from the meanings of the constituent parts. Try to guess their meanings and then check them in a dictionary.

- |                     |                  |
|---------------------|------------------|
| 1) bug-eyed         | 9) touchstone    |
| 2) bluestocking     | 10) tourist trap |
| 3) Chinese whispers | 11) playpen      |
| 4) trigger-happy    | 12) red-top      |

- |                    |                    |
|--------------------|--------------------|
| 5) mystery shopper | 13) red-letter day |
| 6) surface mail    | 14) red giant      |
| 7) tearjerker      | 15) pepper spray   |
| 8) top dog         | 16) numbskull      |

### Exercise 9

Say which initialisms are abbreviations and which are acronyms. For what word does each letter stand for?

For example: the EEC (abbreviation) – the European Economic Community.

- |                    |         |           |
|--------------------|---------|-----------|
| 1) UFO             | 7) THX  | 13) PDQ   |
| 2) BA              | 8) IED  | 14) H. E. |
| 3) CD-ROM          | 9) GPS  | 15) N/A   |
| 4) CD-RW           | 10) GPA | 16) OAP   |
| 5) PDF             | 11) GHQ | 17) DIY   |
| 6) SWOT (analysis) | 12) WC  | 18) R&R   |

### Exercise 10

Say whether the words in the given sets are related to one another by the process of inflection or derivation.

- 1) girl, girls, girl's, girls'
- 2) play plays, played, playing
- 3) play, playful, player, playable
- 4) nice, nicer, nicest
- 5) friend, friendly, friendless, friendship

### Questions and tasks:

1. Compare English and Lithuanian inflections. What can you say about their numbers? What kinds of inflections exist in Lithuanian but are absent in English?
2. Conversion is very productive in present-day English but not in Lithuanian. Why?
3. Using a dictionary, find five examples of clipping and five examples of blending and present them to the class.

4. Find five less known onomatopoeic words and ask your friends to guess their meanings.

## SYNTAX

Syntax is the branch of linguistics that studies sentence structure. In his theory of generative grammar, Noam Chomsky has pointed out to the astonishing fact that a speaker of any language can produce and understand an infinite number of sentences. The inventory of phonemes of a language is finite, the number of words may reach hundreds of thousands, and it would very difficult to try to count all the existing words of a language. However, to say how many sentences there are in a language is really an impossible task. A speaker can create new sentences by adding prepositional phrases, adjectives, clauses, etc.

The traditional grammar, which has its roots in the description of the classical languages – Greek and Latin – provided the distinction and description of the parts of speech: nouns (*window, idea, Mary, milk*), verbs (*give, play, believe, have, be*), adjectives (*nice, new, open*), adverbs (*very, quickly, really*), prepositions (*on, of, without, despite*) pronouns (*she, you, somebody*), articles (*a, the*) conjunctions (*and, when, though*), and interjections (*oh, phew*). Modern linguists, though accepting this distinction, point out to some incompleteness of the definitions of parts of speech. Thus, for example, nouns may be defined as words referring to people, entities, qualities or abstract notions; adjectives are words that modify nouns, expressing quality, property or attribute of a person or entity, etc. In these definitions parts of speech are presented including their essential meaning properties but not all their functional properties are revealed. Yet the distinction of parts of speech (or lexical categories) is of crucial importance because it helps to classify the words of a language.

Using the rules of syntax, we combine words into phrases and phrases into sentences. English has fixed Subject-Verb-Object (SVO) word order. Therefore, the sentence *The children took all the apples.* is correct (grammatical) but the sentence *\*Took all the apples the children.* is ungrammatical.

Sentences are not just lineal strings of words – they may be analyzed hierarchically into phrases. For example, the following sentence contains three phrases, indicated by bracketing.

*[The diligent students] [have completed] [the last task].*

A phrase may consist of one word or a group of words. The substitution test may be used to show the identity of a phrase, i.e. a single word can often replace it. For example, the phrase *the diligent students* can be replaced by the pronoun *they*. Another way to test the reality of phrases is the movement test – a whole phrase can be moved as a unit. Compare the two sentences:

a) *He put the cake on the kitchen table.*

b) *On the kitchen table, he put the cake.*

The main types of phrases are: the noun phrase, the verb phrase, the adjective phrase, the adverb phrase, and the prepositional phrase. Each type of phrase has the head – the lexical category around which the phrase is built. A phrase can contain only the head. Some examples of noun phrases: *a book, the book, people, these people, the red carpet*. Prepositional phrases consist of a preposition and a noun phrase: *on the table, with a spoon, in the crowded street, etc.*

According to Noam Chomsky's generative grammar, a finite set of formal rules project a finite set of sentences upon the potentially infinite number of sentences of a language. To put it more simply, there are a certain number of formal rules which explain the structure of the sentences in a language. One of the main rules states that a sentence consists of a noun phrase and a verb phrase. The hierarchical structure of a sentence can be represented by tree structures, i.e. diagrams showing the hierarchical organization of phrases. On the whole, the analysis of sentence structure proceeds along a number of different lines, depending on the linguistic school and model of analysis.

Sentences are classified into different types. The majority of linguists make a distinction between **functional** and **formal** classifications. From the point of view of their function, sentences are divided into statements (*She closed the window.*), questions (*Did she close the window?*), commands (*Close the window!*), and exclamations (*What a big window!*). The formal classification makes a distinction between declarative, interrogative, imperative, and exclamative sentences. One more categorization of sentences is into simple, complex and compound. Simple sentences have one Subject – Verb unit, e.g. *The cat jumped on the couch*. A compound sentence consists of two or more main clauses, e.g. *He is a busy man, but he promised to help me with this problem*. We have a complex sentence when one clause is used as a main clause and another is added to express subordinate meaning, developing some as-

pect of the main clause, e.g. *When I first saw the building, I was amazed by its size.*

### Exercise 1

Mark the grammatical sentences in each set. Determine why the other sentences are not grammatical.

- 1) The girl put.  
The girl put on the table.  
The girl put carefully.  
The girl put the apples on the table.
- 2) John slept the bed.  
John slept.  
John slept on the bed.
- 3) The children took.  
The children took three.  
The children took three books.  
Three books took the children.

### Exercise 2

Determine what part of speech each word in the given sentences represents.

- 1) A woman was injured in the accident and was taken to hospital.
- 2) If you commit a serious crime, you could be sent to prison.
- 3) A couple were drinking tea at a table by the window.
- 4) Susan gave an amused laugh.
- 5) We got there at about five o'clock.
- 6) He got into the car quickly and drove off.
- 7) The tourists left the lake and climbed higher.
- 8) The girl who came into the room was small and slender.
- 9) The older men couldn't find a job if they left the village.
- 10) Stay with me until I go.

### Exercise 3

Draw a tree structure for each phrase and determine the type of phrase.

- 1) the book

- 2) a new book
- 3) very intelligent
- 4) on the shelf
- 5) with the new binoculars
- 6) so stupid
- 7) ideas
- 8) the brilliant ideas

#### **Exercise 4 (Advanced)**

Draw tree structures for the following sentences.

- 1) A man entered the room.
- 2) Students must study.
- 3) The new students can bring their reports on Friday.
- 4) The players left the field without protest.
- 5) The clever dog found the meat in the kitchen.
- 6) The latest news was about politics.
- 7) Sharks may appear in this lagoon.
- 8) The girl took a bottle of milk from the fridge

#### **Exercise 5**

Indicate cases of coordination and subordination of clauses.

- 1) The girl who was injured in the accident is now in hospital.
- 2) She said you took her notes.
- 3) More and more money is being given to social projects, and it is reasonable to expect that this will become a common practice.
- 4) I asked if I could borrow his car but he refused.
- 5) The medicine, which is being tried at several medical institutions, has already helped a number of patients who have failed to respond to other remedies.
- 6) He was waiting for the girl, who was buying ice cream.
- 7) The woman who was driving the car was all dressed in black.
- 8) I try to ignore the noise they make in the kitchen but I simply can't.
- 9) One passenger was killed and another seriously wounded.

- 10) When I finish this project, I will go on a week holiday in Bahamas.
- 11) When his assignment was finished, he returned home and spent the evening watching TV.
- 12) Sarah got her BA diploma in English philology and now plans to study management.

## SEMANTICS

Semantics is the branch of linguistics that studies meaning in language. It is generally accepted that words, phrases, and sentences have meaning. **Lexical semantics** studies the meanings of words and sense relations (such as synonymy, antonymy and hyponymy). **Sentence semantics** (or sentential semantics) is concerned with the meaning of sentences.

The meaning of words is part of human linguistic knowledge. The meaning of the majority of words is conventional, i.e. all speakers of a language intuitively agree on their meanings. If they did not, it would not be possible for people to communicate with each other.

It is possible to analyze meanings of words decomposing them into more basic **semantic features**. Thus the noun *man* can be described as having the features [+ HUMAN], [+MALE], and [+ADULT]. **Componential analysis** helps to clarify how words relate to other words. Comparing *man* and *boy*, it can be noted that the two words are differentiated only by one semantic feature: *boy* is characterized as [- ADULT].

Linguists acknowledge that it is difficult both to define and to analyze the meaning of a word. One of the reasons is that word meaning is not homogeneous. A distinction is drawn between **denotation**, which is understood as the relationship between words and the entities in the world to which they refer, and **connotation**, which is understood as the additional (often emotional or evaluative) associations suggested by words. Denotation is reflected in the dictionary definitions of words. Thus the denotation of the word *wolf* is “a wild animal that looks like a large dog and lives and hunts in groups” (Longman Dictionary of Contemporary English 2007: 1897). However, for a lot of people the word may arouse associations of danger and rapacity, and these associations may be treated as the word’s connotation. The word *home* has the meaning of a place (house or apartment) where you live, yet it has additional

associations of safeness and warmth. Denotations of words are more stable and established, while connotations are less determinate.

Within the vocabulary, words are semantically related to one another in different ways. **Sense relations** are paradigmatic, i.e. they reflect the choice and the substitution of one word for another in a particular context.

One of the most widespread sense relations is **synonymy**, or sameness of meaning. However, there are no strict or perfect synonyms, i.e. two words usually do not have exactly the same meaning. Compare the adjectives *beautiful* and *pretty*. Both mean someone or something that is attractive to look at. *Beautiful* describes someone who is good-looking in a very special and even exceptional way, whereas *pretty* refers to someone or something that is pleasant to look at but not impressive.

**Antonyms** are words that are opposite with respect to some element of their meaning; for example, *big* and *small* both describe size, but opposite in regard to the extent of the size. A large number of antonymic pairs are adjectives, but this sense relation is also found among other word classes. Three different types of oppositeness of meaning can be distinguished: **gradable antonyms** (gradables), **complementaries**, and **converses**. Gradable antonyms represent a more or less relation, i.e. more of one is less of the other. For example, *rich – poor*, *fast – slow*, *tall – short*. Complementaries represent an either/or relation, which means that the negation of one is the meaning of the other. For example, *dead – alive*, *married – single*. In a pair of converses, one describes a relation between two objects and the other describes the same relation when the two objects are reversed. For example, *teacher – pupil*, *parent – child*, *buy – sell*.

### Semantic relations among sentences

Three types of such relations can be distinguished – paraphrase, entailment, and contradiction.

If two sentences have the same meaning, they are called **paraphrases** of each other. For example, the sentence *The cat chased the mouse*. is a paraphrase of the sentence *The mouse was chased by the cat*.

**Entailment** is a semantic relation between two sentences when the truth of one sentence implies the truth of another but not vice versa. For example, the sentence *Peter saw a fox*. entails *Peter saw an animal*. However, to say that Peter saw an animal does not mean that he saw a fox – he might have seen a wolf, a lion, etc.

Two sentences are contradictory when they both cannot be true at the same time. In other words, if one sentence is true, the other has to be false. For example, *Miranda is alive.* is a contradiction to *Miranda is dead.*

### Exercise 1

Determine whether the given pairs of words represent synonymy or antonymy.

- |                            |                        |
|----------------------------|------------------------|
| 1) long – short            | 6) lucky - fortunate   |
| 2) casual – informal       | 7) free - independent  |
| 3) instantly – immediately | 8) promote - downgrade |
| 4) rebellious – obedient   | 9) above - below       |
| 5) give – take             | 10) private - public   |

### Exercise 2

Linguists say that synonyms are never completely equivalent in their meaning. Check the definitions of the given synonyms in a dictionary and determine their meaning differences.

- 1) look, watch, gaze, stare, scrutinize, peep
- 2) lazy, idle, sluggish, languid
- 3) clever, intelligent, intellectual, brainy, smart, bright

### Exercise 3

Mark the following pairs of words as homophones, homographs or homonyms. (Check the pronunciation of the words).

- 1) bat (animal) – bat (wooden implement)
- 2) route (a way from one place to another) – root (the part of a plant under the ground)
- 3) bow (to bend the top part of your body) – bow (a weapon used for shooting arrows)
- 4) rose ( a flower) – rose (the past tense of *rise*)
- 5) bear (an animal) – beer ( a drink)
- 6) bear (animal) – bear (to bravely accept a difficult situation)
- 7) race (running) – race (one of the main groups that people can be divided into)

#### Exercise 4

There are several kinds of oppositeness of meaning. Indicate whether the pairs of words are gradables, complementaries or converses.

- |                      |                    |
|----------------------|--------------------|
| 1) expensive – cheap | 6) father - son    |
| 2) husband – wife    | 7) in - out        |
| 3) soft – hard       | 8) buy - sell      |
| 4) pretty– plain     | 9) legal – illegal |
| 5) false – true      | 10) deep - shallow |

#### Exercise 5

Which of the three semantic relations (paraphrase, entailment and contradiction) is represented in the given pairs of sentences?

- 1) John is a bachelor.  
John is married.
- 2) Mary gave me this book.  
It was Mary who gave me this book.
- 3) My brother studies at Vilnius University.  
My brother is a student.
- 4) Kate bought a chair.  
Kate bought something.
- 5) My uncle built this house twenty years ago.  
This house was built by my uncle twenty years ago.
- 6) Susan is the only child.  
William is Susan's brother.
- 7) My cat's name is Socks.  
I've got a cat.
- 8) He saw a big mouse.  
He saw a big animal.

#### Exercise 6 (Advanced)

Using the definitions of the given words, carry out their componential analysis. The definitions are taken from *Longman Dictionary of contemporary English*. 2007.

### Footwear

**Shoe** – something that you wear to cover your feet, made of leather or some other strong material

**Boot** – a type of shoe that covers the whole foot and the lower part of the leg

**Sandal** – a light shoe that is fastened onto your foot by bands of leather or cloth, and is worn in warm weather

**Sling back** – a woman's shoe that is open at the back and has a narrow band going around the heel

**Moccasin** – a flat comfortable shoe made of soft leather

**Platforms** – shoes that have a thick layer of wood, leather, etc. under the front part and the heel

**Slipper** – a light soft shoe that you wear at home

**Clog** – a shoe made of wood with a leather top that covers the front of your foot but not your heel

### **Exercise 7 (Advanced)**

Using the definitions of the given words, carry out their componential analysis. The definitions are taken from *Longman Dictionary of contemporary English*. 2007.

### Hairstyles:

**Bob** – a way of cutting hair so that it hangs to the level of your chin and is the same length all the way round your head

**Braid** – a length of hair that has been separated into three parts and then woven together

**Crew cut** – a very short hair style for men

**Dreadlocks** - a way of arranging your hair in which it hangs in thick pieces that look like ropes

**Ponytail** – hair tied together at the back of your head and falling like a horse tail

**Bun** – if a woman's hair is in a bun, she fastens it in a small round shape at the back of her head

**Mohican** – a hairstyle in which the hair is cut off the sides of the head, and the hair on top of the head is made to stick up and is sometimes brightly coloured

**Perm** – straight hair made curly by using chemicals

### Exercise 8 (Advanced)

Which of the given words, in your opinion have connotations? What kind of associations do they arouse to you?

- 1) sea
- 2) school
- 3) table
- 4) candle
- 5) street
- 6) soup
- 7) train
- 8) bear
- 9) pencil

#### Questions and tasks:

1. English is very rich in synonyms. The fact is related to the English language history. Can you explain this relationship?
2. (Advanced) Componential analysis helps to analyze groups of words with related meanings. But it is not easily applicable to all kinds of words. What words would be difficult or even impossible to analyze using this method? Why?
3. (Advanced) Using a dictionary of synonyms, choose a synonymic set of four – five words and compare their meanings. Then check their typical usage in a dictionary of collocations.
4. Sentence semantics is also called truth-conditional semantics. How do you understand this term?

## SOCIOLINGUISTICS

Sociolinguistics is a study of language in social contexts. There are different areas of study within the field itself which range from small-scale studies to very large ones. The field has its own terminology. A **speech community** is a community of speakers who share some characteristics of language use. It can vary in size but it has to be identifiable on the basis of its linguistic and social characteristics, for example, a speech community may be hip-hop fans or members of a profession with their specialized vocabulary. Another term in sociolinguistics is

**speech variety** – the form of language used by any identifiable group of speakers. In modern societies, there is usually one variety of a language that stands above the others because it is used in writing, in the speech of educated speakers, in educational, governmental institutions, and the media. This is the **standard** variety, which is more fixed and less prone to change. It is a variety against which the other varieties are measured. On the whole, speech varieties are grouped into regional varieties, sociolects and registers.

### **Regional dialects**

The study of regional dialects is called **dialectology**. A **dialect** is a variety which is associated with a particular geographic area and differs from other varieties mostly because of its phonological and lexical features. **Dialect atlases** (maps displaying dialect information within a certain geographical area) are used to describe geographical dialects. The boundaries between dialects are represented by lines called **isoglosses**. They are drawn with respect to one linguistic feature. When a number of isoglosses more or less overlap, a dialect boundary is drawn. However, it is sometimes difficult to distinguish dialects because one dialect merges into another. The result is **dialect continuum**, which means that dialect boundaries are not marked sharply. The information about the usage of particular linguistic units in a geographical area is gathered using questionnaires. Informants are asked to indicate which word or type of pronunciation they use. There are regional dialects both in the United Kingdom and the United States.

In Britain, English English (or English spoken in England) includes Southern English dialects, Midlands dialects, and Northern dialects, which, together with the Scottish English, have preserved numerous words from Old Scandinavian.

In the USA, the major dialect areas in the eastern part of the country are the Northern, Midland, and Southern. Moving to the west, the differences, both lexical and phonological, become less distinct. Still, two more dialects – Western and General American can be distinguished.

### **Sociolects**

The social stratification of language reflects the way people speak because of their membership in various social groups. Often the socio-economic status (SES), related to the income, occupation, education, and housing, is used to determine the social group. Social dialects are

mostly investigated in urban areas. The task is usually to determine the extent to which a **linguistic variable** (a linguistic unit whose usage correlates with the social group of the speaker) is used by members of this social group. For example, William Labov, in his New York study, found that the use of final /r/ in certain words was influenced by the socioeconomic group membership – the higher the social status, the more likely were the informants to use /r/.

### **Language and gender**

Differences in the use of language may depend on the sex of the speaker. From the linguistic point of view, the analysis of language in relation to gender focuses on two distinct fields of research: 1) the investigation of differences in male and female language use; 2) the study of language which is used to talk about men and women and how it reflects social attitudes towards them.

In relation to the first issue, it has been noted that conversational strategies may have different potential meanings for men and women. A number of studies have been carried out showing that women tend to use more polite expressions, tag questions, hedges, emotional vocabulary, and minimal responses. They attach more importance to listening of others and, therefore, use fewer interruptions than men. However, women often can talk at the same time overlapping each other if they find the topic interesting and exciting. Women use self-disclosure in conversation, especially among female friends, i.e. they like to share their experiences and problems with others. Women are also more conscious of standard usages of language, while men give preference to the so-called covert prestige of less formal expressions and slang, which they use to establish contact and show solidarity.

The second topic is not only a linguistic issue – it has been widely exploited in feminist debate with the claim that language is often discriminatory against women. An example could be the use of the noun *man* to refer to people in general and the pronoun *he* when the sex of the referent is unknown or irrelevant. However, over the last two decades, a number of changes have taken place in the English language. For example, *chairman* has given way to *chairperson* and the noun *fire fighter* changed the noun *fireman*. The usage of pronouns has also changed considerably. It is now common to write *he/she*, *s/he* or use the generic *they*.

### **Slang, jargon and argot**

**Slang** is informal, nonstandard vocabulary used by a particular group of people to establish contact, to mark their identity as a group, to create an effect, etc. Slang usage is typical of teenage speech or other speech communities that share interests and activities (e.g. music style, sports, etc.). At present slang is an important object of sociolinguistic studies as it reflects the values and interests of the social groups using it. There are numerous slang words that are widely known and their usage does not mark the group identity, e.g. *cool* (attractive, interesting, fashionable, etc.). Some slang words are fashionable for just a short time and reflect the usage of particular age groups, others may stay in the language for a long time. Yet the majority of slang changes rapidly, therefore, it can easily be used inappropriately.

Here are some examples slang words:

Expressions for money: bucks, dough, bread, beans, brass, cabbage.

Expressions for a stupid person: nerd, jerk, loony, boob, nincompoop, jackass.

Expressions for drinking alcohol: to be on the booze, to hit the bottle, to bend the elbow.

**Jargon** refers to words and technical terms used by specialists of a profession or a group of people sharing a certain activity, hobby or occupation. These terms are usually not understood by the non-members. Practically every field of activity has its jargon. The excessive use of jargon may cause irritation of the outsiders if they feel that they have a right to understand the speech of the professionals (e.g. in law or medicine).

**Argot** (or **cant**) is a special vocabulary used by a secretive social group with the aim to protect its members from outsiders. Argot may be a vocabulary of criminals, terrorists or street gangs. An interesting example of secretive language is Cockney rhyming slang – the language of East Londoners. Rhyming slang is created using certain rules and applying them to general language with the aim to be unintelligible to others. A phrase, usually two nouns joined with *and*, is used so that it rhymes with the word it stands for but has no meaning connection with it. The effect is often humorous. For example, *rain – pleasure and pain; stairs – apples and pear; believe – Adam and Eve; fork – Duke of York, etc.*

## Register

**Register** is a variety of language defined according to its use in social situations and different contexts. A person's choice of vocabulary also reveals something about the relationship he or she has with the person who is listening (or reading). The two sentences *Stop talking, please.* and *Shut up, will you?* Have the same meaning. The first sentence belongs to formal register – it is appropriate in formal or neutral situations. The second sentence is impolite. It could be used in a highly informal situation or, maybe, jokingly, talking with a friend. Look at two more sentences: 1) *It is important to determine a scheme whereby such decreases can be checked.* 2) *We must decide on a plan so that we can stop numbers going down.* The first sentence has more formal register. This means that it is appropriate when speaking or writing in formal situations. It would hardly be used discussing the situation with a friend over a cup of coffee. In monolingual dictionaries, the words are often labeled **formal** or **informal**, and the speaker has to be careful not to use such words in wrong contexts.

### Exercise 1

Using a dictionary of slang, find out the meanings of the following words.

- |                          |               |
|--------------------------|---------------|
| 1) gink                  | 8) poker face |
| 2) rumpot                | 9) soup       |
| 3) ginzo                 | 10) wet       |
| 4) never-was (never-wuz) | 11) cotton    |
| 5) jail bait             | 12) joy rider |
| 6) dizzy                 | 13) D and D   |
| 7) frump                 | 14) cool out  |

### Exercise 2

In the following sentences choose a less formal word.

- 1) Tom and Jack (ascended/went up) the hill.
- 2) He had great difficulty with his (breathing/respiration) as he was lying on the grass.
- 3) I've decided to ask my (boss/manager) for a pay rise.

- 4) It is lunchtime. I feel rather (hungry/peckish).
- 5) Their (kids/children) are all really (clever/brainy).
- 6) The road conditions are always pretty (risky/dicey) after a sudden frost.
- 7) I'm busy; please (go away/depart).
- 8) She's just (nipped/gone) out to get some milk.
- 9) He is a very (faint-hearted/pusillanimous) person.
- 10) She is (insane/nuts).

### Exercise 3

Below are given two extracts from transcribed natural conversations that took place in California in 2002. The first conversation is among women friends who are also colleagues. They talk about a wedding ceremony. The second conversation is among male colleagues who talk about business matters. Can you find typical features of male and female language use in them? In transcriptions, **W** stands for woman and **M** stands for man.

#### Conversation 1

- W 1: What were we talking about? The weekend stuff. So how was the bride?
- W 2: aaah – oh the bride was wearing this – her mom made her dress. They only spent maybe like two thousand dollars 'cause the wedding was in the back yard. And...
- W 1: aha, for the whole wedding.
- W 2: Yeah, I bet you, 'cause my husband and I were trying to go...God, how much did they spend? You know...
- W 1: Aha.
- W 2: 'Cause we spent a lot of money. But he was saying roughly they probably spent about two thousand dollars because...
- W 3: <ENTERING THE OFFICE> Just for the dress?
- W 2: No, for the whole wedding.
- W 1: For everything.
- W 3: Oh, for everything?
- W 2: Because...
- W 3: That's too good.
- W 1: That's good.

W 3: That's not expensive.  
W 1: Aha. That's the cheapest wedding I've heard. Well, because it was at her aunt's house.  
W 3: Aha.  
W 2: They had a big back yard...  
W 1: Aha.  
W 2: They had about a hundred and twenty five, sixty people, maybe.  
W 3: Aha.  
W 2: And her co-worker had a big tent that they lent her.  
W 3: Aha.  
W 2: And then her dress was made by her mom, her cake was made by her mom...  
W 3: Oh, yeah. Ahhh...  
W 2: And then her food was made by her relatives like her aunts and uncles. It was ah – it was Mexican food with beans, rice. Salsa.  
W 3: Yeah...  
W 1: So she didn't have to pay for anything then.  
W 2: No, not really. But her dress was really pretty, it was like... ahhh cream satin and it's like a (xxx) type and it's really fitted.  
W 1: Mhm.  
W 2: It's two pieces and the it's like ahh – it was nice it had beaded (xxx)  
W 1: Aha.  
W 2: at front. It was really simple but very elegant and she had ahhh – her son walked her down the aisle.  
W 3: Her son?  
W 2: Yes, she had a son.  
W 3: How come(xxx)?  
W 2: This is like her second marriage.  
W 3: Oh, OK.  
W 2: Her husband now, also this is his second marriage because his little girl...  
W 1: Mhm.  
W 2: and her little boy, they are both now eight years old.  
W 1: Wow!  
W 3: Oh.  
W 2: Yeah, they are both the same age and they were both like taken pictures together, you know <LAUGHS> 'cause on older pictures

<LAUGHS> they were like close to each other, not touching each other, like 'cause they had to take pictures <LAUGHS>.

W 3: <LAUGHS>

W 1: They don't like each other? <LAUGHS>

W 2: At that age you don't like boys or you don't like girls 'cause...

W 3: Yeah, they gonna get along (xxx) yeah?

W 2: Yeah, later on...

## Conversation 2

Note: 2.1 is a version of software that the men work on; 2.2 is the same software upgraded (a more advanced version)

M 1: I mean you buy a car, there is always something wrong with a car but they don't tell you that. All you hear is what's good about it.

M 2: I guess, I guess that's true but it's very sad because it was true.

M 3: And if you send...

M 2: It didn't work with 2.1

M 1: Hopefully, we did have two point one system up there and they are still running.

M 3: Yeah.

M 1: I mean there are still some sites there that are still running on two point one.

M 3: But Nortech was not working.

M 2: Yeah, neither it was on two point two. And if we are, if we are good, why doesn't Daniel go there and try to make the two point two work?

M 1: The... Who are you talking about?

M 2: The Nortech.

M 1: The Nortech?

M 2: Yeah.

M 1: Maybe... See, I don't know why and what this is for. All I know is that guy is a jerk. I mean I should have thrown him out of the office when he came in here. I mean if I would have been here...

M 2: Mhm.

M 1: Certainly, I should have kicked him and said I don't wanna do business with him.

M 2: Mhm.

- M 1: I mean who came in there... You see and you say just get out. And I gave him a discount, just for him to leave the office.
- M 2: Mhm.
- M 3: Or other people are not using reactions, I mean they are not trying to do business with them. What those people are trying to do?
- M 1: What are they trying to do?
- M 3: Running reaction from one computer to another computer. I don't remember now, it was like half a year ago.
- M 1: I know San Onofre is running reactions interfaced with the CCTV system and it's working
- M 3: In some cases it works.
- M 2: It depends on your computer too. I mean once you are trying reactions, it also has a lot to do with how big is the site or the activity because... maybe San Onofre has a couple of cameras that call their CCTV running, but the only thing running is a reaction.
- M 1: No, they don't.
- M 3: They are using reactions for masking and masking, and that was not running
- M 2: And the same problem with the guys in Spain with the reactions. And masking and masking and trying to generate reports that their system does not recognize if people are inside or outside, and this is still a problem. They are still waiting to see maybe the external report will be somehow better. I mean if we have an improvement...
- M 3: Is it that we should not tell the people that it's not working even if it's not working?
- M 1: No. You know we are out of businesses that day.
- M 3: I think we are concentrating on the wrong things again.

## GLOSSARY

- abbreviation** a shortened form of a word. There are several types of abbreviations (see: **acronym**, **alphabetic abbreviation**, **blend**, **clipping**).
- accidental gap** non-occurring but possible word in a language (e.g. *trook* in English).
- acronym** a word that is formed from the initial letters of other words and can be pronounced as a whole word (e.g. *NATO*, *UNESCO*).
- adjective (Adj)** the lexical category of words that describe or give extra information about nouns; they are typically used as modifiers of nouns in noun phrases (e.g. *a happy boy*) but may be used as complements of verbs (e.g. *It is difficult.*).
- allomorph** an alternative variant form of a morpheme (e.g. *cat*<sub>s</sub> [s], *dog*<sub>s</sub> [z]).
- allophone** a predictable realization of a phoneme which is in complementary distribution with the other allomorphs of that phoneme.
- alphabetic abbreviation** a word that is formed from the initial letters of other words and pronounced letter-by-letter.
- ambiguous** a word, a phrase or a sentence that has more than one meaning.
- antonymy** the type of sense relationship expressing the meaning of oppositeness (e.g. *big* – *small*). See also: **gradables**, **complementaries**, **converses**.
- aphasia** language disorder which is the result of brain damage.
- argot** the words used by a group of people who want to conceal the content of their communication from non-members.
- asterisk** the symbol [\*] which is used to mark ungrammatical sentences or phrases.

- back formation** a type of word formation where a new word is made by removing an affix from an old word (e.g. *edit* from *editor*).
- bilabial** a sound articulated by both lips together.
- blend** a word made of the parts of two other words (e.g. *smog* from *smoke* and *fog*; *Eurovision* from *European* and *television*).
- borrowing** the introduction of a word from one language into another; e.g. English borrowed *course* from Old French.
- clipping** a type of word formation where a new word is made by shortening another word. The meaning remains the same; e.g. *exam* from *examination*, *phone* from *telephone*.
- closed class** a type of lexical category that has no new words added to it, e.g. conjunctions.
- complementaries** antonyms related in such a way that the negation of one is the meaning of the other, e.g. *alive* – *dead*; *married* – *single*.
- complementary distribution** a situation when variants of the same phoneme never appear in the same phonetic context. For example, [l] is a voiced consonant but in the word *please*, after the voiceless [p], it becomes voiceless. The different environments create the situation of complementary distribution of the two allophones of the phoneme /l/.
- componential analysis** the representation of a word's meaning in terms of smaller semantic components (or semantic features).
- converses** a sense relation between words with an interdependence of meaning, such that one member of the pair presupposes the other member, e.g. parent – child.
- compounding** a type of word formation where two or more free morphemes are combined to make a new word; e.g. *handbag*, *greenhouse*.
- connotation** the affective meaning associated with a word; e.g. home.

- consonant** a speech sound that is produced with some constriction made in the vocal tract.
- consonant cluster** two or more consonants in a sequence in a word or morpheme.
- creole** a language that has developed from a **pidgin** and has become established as a native language for some speech community.
- derivation** a type of word formation where an affix (prefix or suffix) is added to a stem or root to form a new word; e.g. *friendly* from *friend*, *illegal* from *legal*.
- distinctive feature** (in phonology) a feature that allows a phoneme to contrast meanings of words; e.g. the feature [+voice] of the phoneme /b/ in the word *bit* allows to distinguish the word from the word *pit* where the phoneme /p/ is characterized by [- voice].
- distribution** the total set of linguistic contexts in which a linguistic unit may be used.
- entailment** a semantic relationship between two sentences, such that the truth of the second necessarily follows from the truth of the first, i.e. if the first sentence is true, the second one has to be true too; e.g. *I have eaten an apple* entails *I have eaten a fruit*.
- euphemism** a milder or indirect expression or word used instead of a rude or offensive one; e.g. *powder my nose* for *go to the toilet*.
- gradables** antonyms that have opposite meaning along a scale, as a rule, adjectives, e.g. *big – small*.
- Homographs** words which have the same spelling but different pronunciation and meaning; e.g. *wind* (vējas) and *wind* (prisukti laikrodi).
- homonyms** words which have the same form (spelling and pronunciation) but unrelated meaning; e.g. *bank* (bankas) and *bank* (upės krantas); *seal* (ruonis) and *seal* (antspaudas).

**homophones** words which have the same pronunciation but different spelling and meaning; e.g. *two* and *too*, *son* and *sun*.

**hyponymy** a semantic relation between words with specific meaning and words with general meaning, such that the former is included in the latter. Both words, however refer to the same entity. The more specific word is called **hyponym** and the more general word is called **superordinate**; for example, *tulip* is a hyponym of *flower* or *cat* is a hyponym of *animal*. Hyponymy relates words hierarchically.

**idiolect** a person's individual way of speaking; the particular linguistic features that a person shows a tendency of using.

**intention (sense)** the inherent part of the meaning of a word.

**lingua franca** a language used by speakers of different languages that can be used for communication when they do not have a common native language. For example, English is the lingua franca for international airline pilots.

**linguistic competence** speaker's ability to produce and understand an unlimited number utterances, including many new ones.

**morpheme** the smallest unit of language that carries information about meaning or function; e.g. *table* consists of two morphemes: *table* and *s*.

**nativism** the view that certain grammatical knowledge is inborn.

**neologism** a lexical innovation.

**noun (N)** the lexical category of words that identify people or things and function as the head of a noun phrase; e.g. *dog*, *window*, *Peter*, *milk*.

**open class** the class of content words (nouns, verbs, adjectives or adverbs); they can add new words to the same class (lexical category)

- phrase** one or more words that act as a syntactic unit, e.g. *the table, in the room*.
- pidgin** a speech variety that emerges when speakers of two or more languages come into contact and do not know each other's languages. Pidgins have a very simple grammatical structure and limited vocabulary. They do not have native speakers.
- pitch** (in phonetics) the result of the vibration in the vocal folds, making the sound(s) lower, higher, rising or falling.
- polysemy** a situation when one word has two or more closely related meanings; e.g. *clash* – (1) a short fight between two armies; (2) an argument between people; (3) a sports event between two players or teams that is expected to be very dramatic.
- preposition (P)** a word that typically goes before a noun phrase to form a prepositional phrase (e.g. *in the park, on the table*).
- primary stress** the most prominent stress of a word.
- prototype** the best (most typical) example of a concept; e.g. a sparrow could be a prototype of a bird; a table or bed could be a prototype of furniture.
- referent** a thing or entity to which a word or expression refers.
- register** a speech variety appropriate to a particular speech situation.
- root** the morpheme of a word that carries its main meaning and belongs to a part of speech (e.g. *friend* in the adjective *friendly*; *courage* in the verb *encourage*, *ill* in the noun *illness*).
- standard language** the superposed variety of a language that is employed by the government and the media, and taught in educational institutions.
- structurally ambiguous** the relation between phrases or sentences in which the meanings of their component words can be combined in more than one way, e.g. *French history teacher*.

- syllable** a unit of sound containing a vowel and optional consonants that precede or follow it; e.g. *flashlight* has two syllables. In English some consonants are also syllabic; e.g. [l] in *bottler* or [n] in *sudden*.
- synonyms** words that have the same or almost the same meaning in some or all contexts; e.g. *different, unlike, contrasting, disparate; strength, power, force*.
- taboo (taboo language)** words or expressions that are seen as rude and offensive and should be avoided in speech.
- verb (V)** the lexical category of words that describe actions, states or sensations. It expresses contrasts of tense, aspect, voice, mood, person, and number and functions as the head of a verb phrase; e.g. *run, live, feel*.
- vernacular** a sociolect spoken by a speech community having a lower status; usually contrasted with standard language.
- vocal folds (vocal cords)** the two thin strips of muscle in the larynx, which vibrate when the airflow passes them (creating voiced sounds) or are kept open without vibration (producing voiceless sounds).
- voiced** the glottal state in which the vocal folds are brought close together, but not tightly closed, causing them to vibrate as air passes between them.
- voiceless** the glottal state in which the vocal folds are pulled apart allowing air to pass directly through the glottis.
- vowel** a speech sound that is produced with very little obstruction in the vocal tract.
- word** the smallest free form in language.

## REFERENCES

- Biber, D., Johansson, S., Leech, G., Conrad, S. and E. Finegan 1999. *Longman Grammar of Spoken and Written English*. London: Longman.
- Crystal, D. 1994. *Dictionary of Language and Languages*. Penguin Books.
- Crystal, D. 1997. *Dictionary of Linguistics and Phonetics*. (4th edition) Blackwell.
- Fromkin, V, Rodman, R. and Nina. Hyams. 2007. *An Introduction to Language*. Thomson Wadsworth.
- Longman Dictionary of Contemporary English*. 2007. (4th edition). Longman.
- O'Grady, W., Dobrovolsky, M. and F. Katamba. 1999. *Contemporary Linguistics: An Introduction*. London and New York: Longman.
- Yule. G. 2006. *The Study of Language*. (3rd edition). Cambridge: Cambridge University Press.

Masaitienė, Dalia

Introduction into Linguistics: A Teaching Guide, metodinė priemonė / Dalia Masaitienė. – Kaunas: Vytauto Didžiojo universitetas, 2009. – 48 p.

ISBN 978-9955-12-498-6

Ši mokymo priemonė skirta anglų filologijos studentams, besimokantiems įvadinį kalbotyros kursą. Joje glaustai pateikiamos pagrindinės kurso temos, kiekvienai temai skiriama praktinių užduočių ir klausimų, kurie padeda suprasti ir analitiškai įvertinti teorinę medžiagą. Metodinės priemonės gale pateikiamas pagrindinių lingvistikos terminų žodynelis.

Dalia Masaitienė

INTRODUCTION INTO LINGUISTICS: A TEACHING GUIDE  
Metodinė priemonė

Redaktorė Irena Ragaišienė  
Maketuotoja Janina Baranavičienė

2009-07-03

Išleido Vytauto Didžiojo universitetas  
S. Daukanto g. 27, LT-44249 Kaunas