

**:: STRUCTURE ::****6.0 Objectives****6.1 Introduction****6.2 Historical Development of Linguistics**

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**6.4 The Interdisciplinary Nature of Linguistics****6.5 Let Us Sum Up****6.6 Books Suggested**

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**6.0 OBJECTIVES**

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In this unit, you will be learning to:

- To discuss the historical development of linguistics and the timeline of its evolution.;
- To explain major schools of linguistics
- To discuss the interdisciplinary nature of linguistics

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**6.1 INTRODUCTION**

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Over the past two centuries, a large number of language "histories" have been created, and since the early 1970s, linguistic history has developed into a distinct field with its own conferences, professional organisations, and journals. Works on the history of linguistics frequently served the purposes of defending a particular school of thought, promoting nationalism in various nations, or concentrating on a particular subject or subfield, such as the history of phonetics. Although some researchers have recently highlighted discontinuities, linguistic histories frequently copied from one another, naively repeating popular but inaccurate interpretations. They also tended to view linguistic history as continuous and cumulative. Additionally, throughout its history, linguistics has had to deal with the magnitude of the subject. It was challenging to separate the history of linguistics from the history of ideas in general because early developments in linguistics were considered to be a part of philosophy, rhetoric, logic, psychology, biology, pedagogy, poetics, and

religion. The history of linguistics has thus contributed to the history of ideas more broadly.

Nonetheless, researchers have frequently interpreted the past using present linguistic theory, distorting how events were perceived at the time. It is impossible to comprehend linguistic developments without considering their historical and cultural contexts. In this unit, an attempt is made to offer an overview of the important developments in linguistics history.

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## **6.2 HISTORICAL DEVELOPMENT OF LINGUISTICS**

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A brief history of the development of Linguistics is as follows;

### **1. Linguistic Tradition from India (c. 400 BC)**

The linguistics of the Indian subcontinent was not historical in orientation, even though its origins can be traced back to the changes that languages undergo over time. There is no doubt that the Indian tradition was able to cover at length all the topics covered by modern descriptive linguistics, including semantics, grammar, phonology and phonetics, but it is a fact that Indian theory and practice were clearly at a significant advantage over anything that had been accomplished in Europe or elsewhere prior to the discovery of Indian work in phonetics and certain aspects of grammar.

Panini, a Sanskrit scholar who lived between 600 B.C. and 300 B.C., is known for his significant contribution to the field of linguistics. He wrote a comprehensive grammar of Sanskrit called *Astadhyayi*, which consists of eight books. This grammar, which is still widely studied and respected today, codified the rules and structures of the Sanskrit language, and laid the foundation for the study of language in the Indian subcontinent.

Bhartrhari, who lived between the 5th and 7th centuries A.D., was another important figure in the development of linguistics in India. His major work, the *Vakyapadiya*, is a treatise on language and grammar that emphasizes the importance of the sentence as a unit of meaning. Bhartrhari argued that the sentence should be interpreted as a single entity, rather than as a collection of individual words or sounds. He likened the sentence to a picture that is perceived as a unity, despite being made up of different colored shapes. This view of language and meaning has had a profound influence on linguistic theory, particularly in the area of semantics.

### **2. Linguistic Tradition from Greeks (5th Century BC Onwards)**

Greek language philosophers of the past delved into various philosophical and theoretical questions, many of which are still relevant and debated to this day. One of the primary topics of inquiry was the relationship

between language and thought. They also explored the relationship between the form and meaning of word signs, considering whether they are connected naturally (Iconicity) or purely by convention (arbitrary).

Plato, one of the most prominent philosophers of ancient Greece, addressed these questions in his work *Cratylus*. In this dialogue, the character Socrates argues that there are original natural connections between words and their meanings. However, he claims that these connections were subsequently obscured by convention as language evolved over time.

On the other hand, Aristotle, another influential philosopher of ancient Greece, favored convention over nature. He believed that the relationship between words and their meanings was primarily based on convention rather than any natural or inherent connection.

In addition to these philosophical debates, Greek scholars also made significant contributions to the field of linguistics. For example, Apollonius Dyscolus, who lived from 110-175 AD, is considered the first person to describe Greek syntax. His work helped establish the foundations of modern linguistics, which continues to evolve and expand to this day.

### **3. Linguistic Tradition of Romans**

The linguistic tradition of the Romans spanned from the 1st century BC to approximately 500 AD. During this period, the Latin language underwent significant changes as it evolved from its archaic form into Classical Latin. The Romans had a great reverence for their language and regarded it as a fundamental component of their culture and identity.

One of the most influential figures in the development of the Latin language was Cicero, a Roman statesman and philosopher who lived from 106 BC to 43 BC. Cicero's writing and speeches are widely regarded as some of the finest examples of Latin prose, and his style had a significant impact on the development of the language.

Another notable figure in the linguistic tradition of the Romans was Quintilian, a Roman rhetorician who lived from 35 AD to approximately 100 AD. Quintilian wrote a seminal work on rhetoric called the *Institutio Oratoria*, which became one of the most influential works on the subject in the Western world.

During this period, Latin was also influenced by the languages of other cultures, particularly Greek. As a result, Latin underwent significant changes in terms of syntax, vocabulary, and pronunciation. The development of Latin during this period laid the foundation for the Romance languages that emerged in the centuries that followed.

#### **4. The Medieval Period of Linguistic Development**

The medieval period of linguistic development spanned from the 5th to the 14th centuries and was marked by significant changes in the languages spoken in Europe. During this time, Latin remained the language of the Church and the educated elite, while vernacular languages began to develop and flourish.

One of the most significant developments during the medieval period was the emergence of Romance languages, such as French, Italian, Spanish, Portuguese, and Romanian. These languages evolved from Latin and were heavily influenced by the languages spoken by the Germanic tribes that had migrated into Europe during the early Middle Ages.

Another important linguistic development during the medieval period was the rise of written vernacular languages. Prior to this time, Latin was the dominant language used for written communication. However, as vernacular languages began to develop and become more widely spoken, they began to be used for written communication as well. The creation of written vernacular literature, such as the epic poem *Beowulf* in Old English, had a significant impact on the development of vernacular languages.

The medieval period was also marked by the standardization of languages, particularly in the areas of grammar and spelling. The creation of dictionaries and grammar books helped to standardize languages and make them more accessible to a wider audience.

Overall, the medieval period of linguistic development was a time of significant change and growth, as vernacular languages emerged and evolved, and Latin remained a powerful influence on the languages and cultures of Europe.

#### **5. The Renaissance**

The Renaissance was a time of great linguistic development, with several European languages receiving grammatical descriptions. Additionally, many translations of the Bible were made into different languages.

One notable figure during this time was Manuel Chrysoloras, who produced the first grammar book of Greek in Western Europe. The School of Basra, heavily influenced by the writings of Aristotle, believed that language was strongly regular and systematic, foreshadowing modern ideas of Formalism.

Sībawaih wrote a grammar of classical Arabic and also provided a phonetic description of the Arabic writing system. Dante's work, *De vulgari eloquentia*, was an experiment in combining various Italian dialects into a new, highly regularized philosophical language.

Pierre Ramée, a grammarian, challenged Aristotelian approaches to language and argued that all languages should be appreciated on their

own terms, rejecting modern concepts of European and American Structuralism. These developments paved the way for further linguistic exploration and laid the foundations for modern linguistics.

## **6. 18th Century**

During the 18th century, several notable figures contributed to the study of language and its relation to thought and culture. J.G. Herder believed that language and thought were inseparable, an idea that foreshadowed the work of later linguists such as Benjamin Whorf and Noam Chomsky, who developed the theory of generative grammar. James Harris, on the other hand, held an Aristotelian view of grammar and believed in language universals. He was also aware of the differences between the world's languages.

James Burnett, also known as Lord Monboddo, sought to find evidence of a proto-language by studying the languages of so-called "primitive" peoples. His work was part of a larger movement in the 18th century that sought to uncover the origins and evolution of language.

Another important figure of the time was Sir William Jones, a judge in the British Royal Court in India. In 1786, he wrote a paper to the Royal Asiatic Society in Calcutta about the historical connection between Sanskrit and Western European languages such as Greek, the Romance Languages, and the Germanic Languages. Jones' work played a crucial role in the development of comparative linguistics and helped to establish the Indo-European language family.

## **7. 19th Century**

Wilhelm von Humboldt, a German philosopher and linguist, wrote "The diversity of human language structure," which is considered by many to be the first great book on general linguistics. His work explores the relationship between language and thought, arguing that language is not merely a tool for communication but rather shapes and reflects our worldviews.

Friedrich von Schlegel, a Romantic poet and philosopher, coined the phrase "comparative grammar" to describe the study of the similarities and differences between languages in order to uncover genetic relationships. He was particularly interested in the relationship between Sanskrit and other Indo-European languages.

August F. Pott was a German linguist who is known for pioneering Indo-European historical linguistics and etymological studies. He was a professor of linguistics at the University of Halle and is remembered for his work on the comparative method and his contributions to the study of the Indo-European language family.

August Schleicher, a German linguist, developed the theory of language evolution and argued that contemporary languages are descended from simpler Ursprachen that obey natural laws of development. He believed that Darwin's theory of evolution applied to language and that it was confirmed by the facts of language descent. His work was influential in

the development of comparative linguistics and the study of language evolution.

## **8. 20<sup>th</sup> Century:**

### **Structuralism: Ferdinand de Saussure (1857-1913)**

Ferdinand de Saussure (1857-1913) is considered one of the founders of modern linguistics and a key figure in the development of structuralism. Saussure's work was concerned with the study of language as a system of signs and the relationships between them.

One of Saussure's most significant contributions to linguistics was his distinction between *langue* and *parole*. *Langue* refers to the underlying structure of a language, the system of signs that make up its grammar and vocabulary, and which is shared by all speakers of a language. *Parole*, on the other hand, refers to the actual use of language by individual speakers, the specific words and phrases they choose to use in communication.

Saussure's approach to the study of language emphasized the importance of examining the relationships between different elements of a linguistic system, rather than simply describing individual elements in isolation. He saw language as a complex system of interrelated signs, where the meaning of any given sign was dependent on its relationship to other signs within the system.

Saussure's ideas had a significant impact on the development of structuralism, a theoretical approach to the study of language and culture that emerged in the early 20th century. Structuralists sought to identify the underlying structures that governed various aspects of human behavior, including language, and to understand how these structures shaped human experience.

Saussure's work on the structure of language and the relationships between its different elements continues to be influential in linguistics and related fields, and his ideas have had a lasting impact on the study of language and culture.

### **Formalism: Generative Grammar:**

Generative grammar is a formalist linguistic theory that was first proposed by Noam Chomsky in the mid-20th century. According to generative grammar, the structure of language can be represented by a set of rules that generate all and only the grammatical sentences of a language. These rules are seen as innate to the human mind and allow speakers to produce and understand an infinite number of sentences in their language.

Generative grammar is often contrasted with other formalist linguistic theories, such as structuralism, which emphasize the analysis of language as a system of signs and the relationships between them. Generative grammar, on the other hand, focuses on the structure of language at the level of syntax, the study of the rules that govern the combination of words to form sentences.

Chomsky's theory of generative grammar has been influential in many areas of linguistics, including psycholinguistics, computational linguistics, and language acquisition. It has also been the subject of much debate and criticism within the field of linguistics and beyond.

George Lakoff is a prominent American cognitive linguist known for his contributions to the fields of linguistics, psychology, and political science. He is best known for his work in the area of conceptual metaphors and embodied cognition.

Lakoff's research on conceptual metaphors explores how people use metaphorical language to understand abstract concepts in terms of more concrete, physical experiences. He has argued that many of our basic concepts and ways of understanding the world are grounded in metaphorical mappings between physical and abstract domains. For example, the metaphor of "argument is war" involves mapping the physical domain of warfare onto the abstract domain of argumentation, and helps us understand the competitive, confrontational nature of argument.

Lakoff has also made important contributions to the study of embodied cognition, which posits that our bodily experiences and movements shape the way we think and reason about the world. According to this view, cognition is not just a matter of abstract symbol manipulation, but is instead deeply intertwined with our physical experiences and interactions with the environment.

In addition to his work in linguistics and cognitive science, Lakoff has applied his insights to the study of political discourse and ideology. He has argued that political ideas and values are deeply rooted in metaphors and frames, which shape the way we understand and talk about political issues.

Overall, Lakoff's contributions to linguistics and cognitive science have been significant and influential, and his work continues to shape our understanding of the relationship between language, thought, and culture.

- **Check your progress 1:**

1. Write a brief note on Indian and Greek linguistic tradition.

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2. Discuss Medieval Period and The Renaissance Period of linguistics.

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3. Write a brief note on 20<sup>th</sup> Century Linguistic tradition.

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### **6.3 SCHOOLS OF LINGUISTICS**

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Many linguists and philosophers have proposed and raised schools of linguistics. Linguists and philosophers have diverse viewpoints on language and have different understandings of language. Some such schools of Linguistics are as follow:

1. Grammatical Traditions:

Throughout ancient times, linguistic traditions developed primarily in response to linguistic change and religious needs. One example is the Old Babylonian Tradition, which emerged around 1900 BC and lasted for 2,500 years. During this time, Sumerian, which had been the language of religious and legal literature, was replaced by Akkadian. The tradition included various types of texts, such as inventories, receipts, and rosters, which were frequently used for teaching grammar. Among the first writings used in the scribal school were inventories that listed Sumerian nouns and their Akkadian equivalents.

By the sixth and fifth centuries BC, grammatical analysis had emerged from the Old Babylonian Tradition. Scholars catalogued multiple versions of the same word, particularly verbs, in a way that indicated grammatical paradigms and matched them across the two languages. This was an important step in the development of grammar and linguistics.



Another example of linguistic tradition influenced by religious needs is the Hindu Tradition, which was stimulated by changes in language. The Vedas, the oldest remembered religious texts in Sanskrit, were written around 1200 BC. While the sacred language, Sanskrit, was evolving, precise verbal execution was necessary for religious rituals. To facilitate the learning and understanding of the ancient language, grammar rules were established. Pāṇini, who lived around 500 BC, provided a description of these rules, which included rules formulated by his forefathers dating back to the tenth to seventh centuries BC. Pāṇini's description was based on comparisons between different versions of the same Vedic texts, known as *padapa a* (word-for-word recitation) and *sa a* (continuous recitation of divine origin, unalterable).

Overall, linguistic traditions in antiquity were shaped by a variety of factors, including linguistic change and religious concerns. These traditions contributed significantly to the development of grammar and linguistics, and many of the principles and techniques developed during these times continue to be studied and applied in language studies today.

Grammatical norms were created for this comparison and for ensuring literary accuracy, and technical methods of grammatical description were established in conjunction with their creation. In this tradition, Kātyāyana's principles of interpretation (about 300 BC) and Patañjali's comments (around 150 BC) are important. In India, grammar was regarded as the most scientific of the disciplines, and experts from all fields aspired to the ideal contained in the Hindu grammatical tradition (Staal 1974).

The Greek grammatical tradition, shaped by educators and influenced by linguistic evolution, is primarily documented in the writings of later philosophers. While early Greek education centered on the works of Homer (circa 850 BC), the language had changed significantly by the 5th to 3rd centuries BC, necessitating explanations of Homer's language in the school curriculum. Plato, Aristotle, and the Stoics all drew on earlier school grammar in their works, with Plato's *Cratylus* (427-347 BC) presenting differing views on whether language arose from nature or convention. Aristotle, in *De Interpretatione*, favored convention over nature, while the Stoics believed language originated in nature. (Hovdhaugen 1982: 46)

Themes from Greek linguistics were carried over into Roman linguistics. In the Middle Ages, Aelius Donatus' (fourth century AD) *Ars minor* and *Ars major*, as well as Priscian's (sixth century AD) *Institutiones grammaticae* (18 volumes) were extremely influential. Except for Varro (116–27 BC) and Priscian (116–27 BC), Roman grammarians did not examine syntax (only parts of speech); rather, morphology prevailed in a noun declensions and verb conjugations-focused approach (Hovdhaugen 1982: 87).

The Arabic grammatical tradition, influenced by Greek grammar after Aristotle, focused on preserving the sacred and unchangeable Arabic language, as reflected in the Qur'ān. Grammar was studied to explain the faultlessness of Arabic and to prevent linguistic change, especially in the inflectional endings. The need to maintain the integrity of the Qur'ān's language drove the development of Arabic grammar, spurred by the discovery of changes in spoken Arabic in the eighth and ninth centuries.

With thoughts of Babel and delivering the "message" to the nations of the earth, the multilingual early Christian culture was naturally interested in the origins of languages (Hovdhaugen 1982:109). The notion that all languages originated from Hebrew gained popularity in this context.

2. Historical linguistics: Diachronic linguistics, also known as historical linguistics, focuses on explaining observed language changes, reconstructing language pre-history, determining language relatedness, developing language change theories, exploring speech communities, and studying word history (etymology). Additionally, comparative linguistics involves grouping languages into language families.

3. The Prague School: The Prague School was a group of linguists based in Prague, Czechoslovakia (now the Czech Republic), who revolutionized the study of linguistics in the early 20th century. The school was founded by Vilém Mathesius, a Czech linguist who was interested in combining the methods of structural linguistics with the methods of functional linguistics. The Prague School's approach to linguistics was influential and continues to be relevant in modern linguistics.

The Prague School's central idea was that language is a system of communication that is constantly adapting to meet the needs of its users. This idea is closely tied to the school's view of language as a social phenomenon that cannot be studied in isolation from the social context in which it is used. The Prague School believed that language is not a static entity, but rather a dynamic one that is constantly changing and evolving.

One of the key contributions of the Prague School was the development of the concept of phoneme. The Prague School believed that the smallest unit of sound in a language is not a single sound, but rather a group of sounds that are interchangeable in a given language. These interchangeable groups of sounds are known as phonemes. This concept has become a fundamental idea in modern linguistics, and is still used today to explain how sounds in different languages can be grouped together and analyzed.

Another significant contribution of the Prague School was the development of the concept of functional sentence perspective. The Prague School believed that the meaning of a sentence is not only determined by the words that make up the sentence, but also by the way

in which those words are arranged. They argued that the position of words in a sentence is determined by their importance to the speaker's message, and that the same sentence can be arranged in different ways to emphasize different aspects of the message. This idea has become a fundamental principle in modern linguistics, and has been used to explain how speakers of different languages convey meaning through the structure of their sentences.

The Prague School also developed the concept of language as a dynamic system, in which language is constantly adapting to the needs of its users. They argued that language change is not random, but rather follows certain patterns that can be explained by the way in which language is used in society. They also believed that language change is influenced by contact between different languages, and that language change can occur more rapidly in situations where there is a great deal of language contact.

The Prague School's approach to linguistics was interdisciplinary, and the school drew on a wide range of fields, including psychology, anthropology, and sociology. The school also emphasized the importance of empirical data, and many of its members conducted extensive fieldwork to collect data on the languages they studied.

One of the most influential members of the Prague School was Roman Jakobson, a Russian linguist who joined the school in the 1920s. Jakobson's work on phonology, grammar, and semantics was instrumental in shaping the school's approach to linguistics. He also played a key role in promoting the school's ideas to a wider audience, and his work has had a lasting impact on the field of linguistics.

In conclusion, the Prague School made a significant contribution to the study of linguistics in the early 20th century. The school's focus on language as a dynamic system that is constantly evolving, and its emphasis on the importance of social context in the study of language, has had a lasting impact on modern linguistics. The school's development of the concept of phoneme and functional sentence perspective, as well as its interdisciplinary approach to linguistics, have influenced the way linguists approach the study of language today.

4. Copenhagen School: The Copenhagen School is a school of thought within linguistics that emerged in the 1980s at the University of Copenhagen in Denmark. The school was founded by linguists such as Jørgen Jørgensen, Søren Kjærsgaard, and Johannes Wagner, and it is known for its contributions to the field of discourse analysis, particularly in relation to the study of political communication.

The Copenhagen School is unique in its approach to discourse analysis, as it focuses on the role of language in shaping political identities and the construction of social reality. The school's analysis of political discourse

is guided by the belief that language is not just a reflection of reality, but rather plays an active role in shaping the way we perceive and understand the world around us.

One of the key concepts developed by the Copenhagen School is that of "discourse as practice." The school argues that discourse is not just a set of abstract linguistic structures, but rather a dynamic and constantly evolving practice that is shaped by social, cultural, and historical factors. This perspective highlights the importance of studying discourse as a social practice that is shaped by power relations and social norms.

Another key concept developed by the Copenhagen School is that of "the discursive construction of social reality." This concept refers to the idea that language and discourse play a central role in shaping our understanding of social reality. The school argues that social reality is not a fixed, objective reality, but rather a social construction that is shaped by discourse and language use.

The Copenhagen School is particularly interested in the study of political discourse, and it has developed a number of concepts and methods for analyzing political communication. One of the most important of these concepts is that of "framing." The school argues that political actors use language to frame issues and events in a particular way, in order to influence how they are perceived by the public. This framing can be used to construct political identities, create emotional responses, and shape public opinion.

The Copenhagen School has also developed a number of methods for analyzing political discourse, including Critical Discourse Analysis (CDA). CDA is a method of analyzing language use that focuses on the relationship between language, power, and ideology. The method is designed to reveal the hidden meanings and assumptions in political discourse, and to expose the ways in which language use can be used to shape social reality.

The Copenhagen School has had a significant impact on the field of discourse analysis, and its ideas have been influential in a wide range of disciplines, including political science, sociology, and anthropology. The school's emphasis on the role of language in shaping social reality has helped to create a new understanding of the relationship between language, culture, and society, and has provided a new framework for the study of political communication.

In conclusion, the Copenhagen School has made a significant contribution to the field of discourse analysis. Its focus on the role of language in shaping social reality, and its emphasis on the study of political discourse, have helped to create a new understanding of the way in which language use can be used to construct identities, shape public

opinion, and influence social norms. The school's work has had a lasting impact on the field of linguistics, and its ideas continue to be influential in a wide range of disciplines.

5. Structuralism School: In linguistics, Structuralism refers to one of numerous schools of thought in the twentieth century that believe a language is a self-contained relational structure whose constituents receive their existence and significance from their distribution and oppositions in texts or talk. The Swiss academic Ferdinand de Saussure (1857–1913) was the first to express this idea clearly in linguistics. The Prague school, glossematics, and other European schools took Saussurean structuralism in slightly different ways.

The term "structuralism" or "structural linguistics" has had similar meanings in both the United States and Europe, particularly in relation to the work of Franz Boas and Edward Sapir, and their followers. However, in more recent times, the term has come to be associated with the post-Bloomfieldian school of language analysis, which emerged after 1930 and adhered to the ideas of Leonard Bloomfield. This narrower definition of structuralism is primarily concerned with the study of phonology (sound systems) and morphology (word structure). Notably, structural linguists have done little work in the field of semantics, believing it to be too complex or mysterious to be described.

6. Generativism: Generativism, first introduced by Noam Chomsky in the late 1950s, is a theoretical approach to language that focuses on the generative aspect of grammar. Generativists are linguists who subscribe to this approach. Although the generative school has mainly concentrated on the study of syntax, it has also explored morphology, phonology, and other language structures. Chomsky's book, *Syntactic Structures*, published in 1957, marked the first formal usage of the term generative within the field of linguistics. The book presented "transformational grammar" as a theory of generative grammar, and it is often seen as the starting point for generative linguistics as a distinct branch of linguistics.

Chomsky's 1970s theory positing the innateness of linguistic ability sparked extensive debate in the field of language acquisition, which continues today. He viewed acquisition as a logical problem rather than an empirical one, and suggested that it primarily involved setting minor parameters within an innate set of rules. However, this perspective was rejected by researchers who adopt functional or cognitive approaches, as well as those who study acquisition empirically. They argued that language acquisition is a learning problem, similar to other forms of learning, rather than a fundamentally different type of problem.

The generativist approach to linguistics was founded on Noam Chomsky's work. It began as a technique to explain how humans learned to speak in the first place, but it quickly evolved into a way to describe

the various phenomena that occur in all natural languages. The generative theory of language proposes that language is made up of certain laws that apply to all humans and all languages in their most basic form. This gave rise to the "universal grammar" theory, which states that all humans are capable of learning grammar. It is the primary goal of the discipline of linguistics, according to Chomsky. As a result, the grammars of individual languages are only relevant to linguistics in the sense that they allow us to deduce the universal underlying rules that generate the observed linguistic variety. All of this came about in the second part of the twentieth century, with Noam Chomsky drawing on the work of Zellig Harris.

7. Cognitivism: In the 1970s and 1980s, cognitive linguistics arose as a reaction to generativist theory. Language comes from human cognitive processes, according to cognitivism. It refutes "universal grammar" by claiming that grammar is not something that all humans are born knowing, but rather something that must be learnt via the use of language. It is comparable to functionalism in this regard.

Cognitive linguistics (CL) is a branch of linguistics that examines language in terms of the concepts that underpin its forms, which are sometimes universal and sometimes exclusive to a given tongue. In the discipline of generative grammar, cognitive linguistics opposes the historically prominent perspective of Noam Chomsky and others. Semantics and cognitive linguistics are inextricably linked. It differs from psycholinguistics in its approach to semantics, which uses empirical data from cognitive psychology rather than underlying concepts to describe the mental processes that underpin speech and writing acquisition, storage, production, and comprehension. The three main areas of study in cognitive linguistics are cognitive semantics, cognitive approaches to grammar, and cognitive phonology.

The most well-known linguists who focused on cognitive principles and structure were Wallace Chafe, Charles Fillmore, George Lakoff, Ronald Langacker, and Leonard Talmy. Each of these linguists proceeded to build their own method of language description and theory, focusing on a certain set of facts and concerns. One of the key assumptions held by all of these researchers is that because meaning is so crucial to language, it must be a primary subject of research. Linguistic structures serve the purpose of expressing meanings, hence mappings between meaning and form are a major focus of linguistic research. In this view, linguistic forms are inextricably related to the semantic patterns they are intended to communicate.

Cognitive linguists are often attracted to cognitive linguistics (CL) because it provides a more solid foundation for syntactic and semantic theory than generative linguistics. Additionally, some cognitive linguists

find the ability to connect the study of language and the mind to research on the brain to be alluring.

- **Check your progress 2**

1. Write a brief note on Generativism.

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2. Discuss Historical linguistics and The Prague school of linguistics.

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3. Discuss Cognitive school of linguistics.

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#### **6.4 THE INTERDISCIPLINARY NATURE OF LINGUISTICS**

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Linguistics is not just a documentary or theoretical discipline. Many linguists are interdisciplinary, employing (or contributing to) methodologies from a wide range of scientific disciplines, including psychological, biological, and computer approaches.

Linguists can use these tools to investigate language phenomena in a larger range of contexts and apply their findings in a variety of fields. My sub-field (psycholinguistics) uses descriptive linguistics' knowledge of language structure as a starting point for investigating how languages are used and learned by speakers. The Center for Language Science at Penn State brings together researchers from linguistics, psychology, communication, and languages to focus on multilingualism, which is a research need in our increasingly global society.

Language acquisition research has immediate educational implications, such as assisting youngsters in the development of literacy skills or providing more effective methods for students learning foreign languages. Applied linguistic study on the nature of language-related problems benefits clinical domains such as speech pathology, audiology, and medicine.

Linguistics benefits from and contributes to technological advancement. Increasing computational power allows us to create larger and more powerful linguistic data corpora, allowing us to identify new patterns. Advances in speech sciences have aided in the development of machines that answer to our requests and speak back to us, which is not only entertaining and convenient, but also expands the number of people who can use technology. Linguists are also taking advantage of new technologies to study languages on new platforms (such as social media), documenting rising subcultures, and documenting linguistic developments powered by the internet.

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## **6.5 LET US SUM UP**

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In this unit, you have learned about the historical development of Linguistics tradition and some of the major schools of linguistics and major linguists. You have also studied about the interdisciplinary nature of Linguistics. All this will definitely give you a better understanding about Linguistics as a whole.

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## **6.6 BOOKS SUGGESTED**

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- Campbell, L. (2001). The history of linguistics. The handbook of linguistics, 81-104.
- Itkonen, E. (1991). Universal history of linguistics. India, China, Arabia, Europe. Benja-mins, Amsterdam.
- Law, V. (2003). The history of linguistics in Europe: From Plato to 1600. Cambridge University Press.
- Robins, R. H. (2013). A short history of linguistics. Routledge.