

The Structuralist school

This lesson examines the structuralist school of thought, with an emphasis on the seminal contributions of Swiss linguist Ferdinand de Saussure. His ideas, while initially focused on language, had a deep and long-lasting impact not only on linguistics but on a wide range of subjects. Before Saussure, the study of language was primarily philological and historical. Scholars studied the etymology of words, compared languages across time, and established historical linkages between them. Saussure, however, headed a new era by calling for a synchronic approach—the study of language as a system at a given point in time, rather than its diachronic evolution. His later released book established the foundation for structural linguistics and, by extension, structuralism as a whole. Saussure's structuralism was mostly based on his famous dichotomies.

1- Ferdinand de Saussure's Dichotomies

F. de Saussure was a Geneva-born Swiss linguist (1857_1913). He is widely considered the “father” of 20th c linguistic. He died without having written any major work on general linguistics, but his students collected together his lecture notes and published them under the title “Cours de Linguistique Générale”, translated as “course in General Linguistics” (1916) which exerted a major influence on the course of linguistics particularly in Europe.

De Saussure's crucial contribution was his explicit statement that all language items are essentially interlinked. This was an aspect of language which had not been stressed before, nobody has examined the relationship of each element to all the others. It was de Saussure who introduced “chess analogy”, he suggested that language is like a game of chess, a system in which each item is defined by its relationship to all the others. He went further explaining that a person can be a good player of chess without knowing the rules, and concentrating on the game not around it. His insistence on the fact that language is a carefully built structure of interwoven elements initiated the era of Structural linguistics. All linguistics since de Saussure is structural, structural in this new brought sense merely means the recognition that language is a pattern of system composed of interdependent elements rather than a collection of unrelated individual elements.

❖ **Langue/parole**

De Saussure was the first who drew distinction between the language system and the use of language

**Langue: is the language system (grm, vocab, pronunciation ...) of a community: it is something that the individual speaker can make use of but cannot affect by himself: it is a social phenomenon (social fact). Langue is the abstract linguistic system that is shared by all the members of the speech community and no one possesses it, it exists perfectly only within a collectivity. Langue, which is similar to our knowledge of language, is the repertoire or sum of rules and lexis which is stored in the brain of each member of a speech community.*

** Parole: is idiosyncratic, the product and the realization of langue by individuals when putting it into practice. De Saussure pointed out that parole, as being the speech of individuals, is not perfect and may contain mistakes like: slips of tongue, hesitations, false starts, sentences broken off halfway and other familiar characteristics of informal speech, thus, if ever there is a mistake, it is considered as a mistake of parole.*

In this view, linguists should ignore these features and seek for the system behind them, this system is the proper object of a linguistic study, it can be regarded as an object which is relatively stable, free from idiosyncrasy and that exists outside the individual who can neither create it for himself nor modify it arbitrarily. Parole means individual speech in society, or the individual way of applying the rules in actual speech. Langue may be partially equated with Chomsky's competence, and parole with performance.

❖ **Synchrony/Diachrony**

Before de Saussure, linguistics was diachronic (historical) or philology. This kind of study was prescriptive. i.e. It is used to set up rules to the speakers (gr rules), how language should be used and not how it is used.

Diachronic linguistics is the study of language through history. While synchronic linguistics means the study of language as it is used by its speakers at a given point in time. The first type of study can be called historical (historical ling) and the second type descriptive

(descriptive ling). Diachronic linguistics is historical in the sense that it deals with the historical evolution of particular languages, for example, a diachronic study of English would examine the development of old English into Middle English and then into Modern English. A diachronic study of Arabic would be concerned with its evolution from pre-Islamic period to the present day, and a diachronic study of French would deal with its historical development from Latin.

Synchronic linguistics looks at a specific state of a language at a given time. It can examine a language that is spoken today as well as an old language. A linguist can investigate a language that is no longer spoken/used if he has sufficient recorded data on which to rely.

It was de Saussure (1916), who first stressed the importance of synchronic ling, which is completer and more precise than diachronic ling, since with the latter, it is very hard to have enough reliable recorded materials, and it is not possible to check hypotheses against the intuition of native speakers. That is why there is a danger for diachronic studies to be speculative.

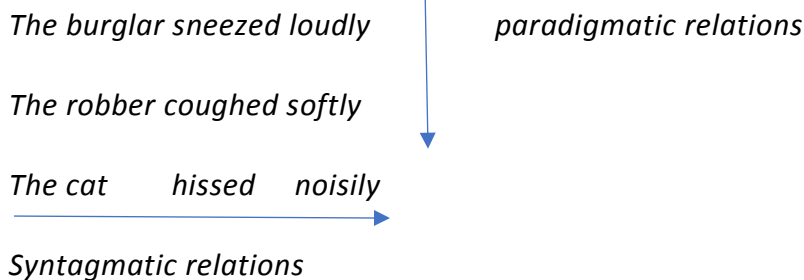
Nevertheless, many 'dead' languages such as Latin can be studied reasonably systematically from a synchronic point of view, as they have left behind enough recorded materials such as written texts, official pronouncements and literary works. Through these materials, the Latin used at a certain period of history can be synchronically described in detail. The synchronic study of language was undertaken in the first half of the 20th c as reaction against the 19th c 'comparative philology'. Modern ling is characterized by the primacy of the synchronic description of lge. Most 20th c linguistic studies are concerned with language synchronically in the sense that they overlook diachronic features and historical ling phenomena which are considered as irrelevant to the description of particular states of languages.

❖ Syntagmatic/Paradigmatic Relations

De Saussure declared that language is a two-dimensional system: one horizontal representing the syntagmatic relations, the other vertical representing paradigmatic relations.

Syntagmatic relations are essentially relations of combination, inclusion and co-occurrence i.e. the relations between an item in a particular position in the sentence and other items that occur in other positions in the same sentence (how items combine together to make well-formed sentences).

Paradigmatic relations are essentially relations of selection substitution and exclusion i.e. the relation between an item in a particular syntactic position and other items that might have been chosen but are not.



When we look at syntagmatic and paradigmatic relations, we can notice that words belonging to the same classes can combine with one another to build large constructions, and words belonging to the same class substitute for one another in the same slot. Rules controlling the combination and the substitution of items are found in 'langue'. If one element is affected, the whole system will be affected. Thus, all words have a relation with those words which are not present but are part of the language.

❖ **The Arbitrary Nature of the Sign**

De Saussure defined language as being a symbolic system (it is a system of signs and symbols) based on pure or arbitrary conventions infinitely extendible and modifiable according to the changing needs and the conditions of the speakers. He argued that a linguistic sign is not a link between a thing and a name, but rather a two-sided psychological entity composed of two inseparable elements. For him, the linguistic sign is the basic unit of communication, a unit within the langue of the community. Langue in this sense can be seen as 'a system of signs'. It unites a concept with a sound-image. The concept is referred to as 'the signified' and the sound-image as the 'signifier'.

Signifier is the word given arbitrarily to the object or idea it defines (as perceived by the ear), whereas the signified is the thing, object or idea being referred to. The signifier changes from one language to another while the signified remains always the same. E.g: book, livre, كتاب

Arbitrariness: the forms of linguistic signs bear no natural resemblance to their meaning. The link between them is a matter of convention, and convention differ radically across languages. Thus, the English word “dog” happens to denote a particular four-footed domesticated creature, the same creature which is denoted in French by the completely different form “chien”.

Although the link between form and meaning is arbitrary in this respect that is not to say that there is no relationship between them at all. Words are arbitrary in form, but they are not random in their use. On the contrary, it is precisely because linguistic forms do not resemble what they signify that they can be used to encode what is significant by convention in different communities.

Saussure's ideas were revolutionary and had a profound impact that extended far beyond the field of linguistics. His emphasis on the systematic nature of language, the arbitrary nature of the sign, and the importance of relational meaning provided a new framework for understanding not only language but also other cultural and social phenomena.

Introduction to Behaviorism

Behaviorism was the dominant school of thinking in psychology for most of the twentieth century. While differing from Saussure's structuralism, behaviorism tried to provide a more objective and scientific approach to understanding its subject - in this case, behavior. Behaviorism is fundamentally a learning theory that focuses on observable behaviors and the contextual factors that influence them. It strongly opposes the study of internal mental states such as thoughts, feelings, and consciousness, judging them subjective and impossible to empirical assessment. Consider it as focused on what we can see and measure directly:

actions and the stimuli that before and follow them. Several major personalities influenced the course of behaviorism, but we'll concentrate on the seminal contributions of Ivan Pavlov and B.F. Skinner.

➡ **Ivan Pavlov**, a Russian scientist, laid a key foundation for behaviorism with his accidental discovery of classical conditioning. While examining the digestive systems of dogs, Pavlov discovered that the dogs began to salivate not only when they were offered with food, but also when they saw the lab assistants or heard their footsteps - stimuli that had been connected with the presentation of food. Pavlov's work highlighted the power of stimulus-response associations in shaping behavior.

➡ **B.F. Skinner** and his notion of operant conditioning revolutionized behaviorism. While classical conditioning focuses on associating stimuli, operant conditioning highlights how consequences influence voluntary activities. Skinner contended that behaviors are acquired and maintained according to their results, whether they are reinforced or penalized. The fundamental principles of operant conditioning are:

- Reinforcement: Any consequence that increases the likelihood of a behavior being repeated.
 - Positive Reinforcement: Adding something desirable to increase a behavior.
 - Negative Reinforcement: Removing something undesirable to increase a behavior. Note that negative reinforcement is not punishment; it still aims to increase the behavior.
- Punishment: Any consequence that decreases the likelihood of a behavior being repeated.
 - Positive Punishment: Adding something undesirable to decrease a behavior.
 - Negative Punishment: Removing something desirable to decrease a behavior (e.g., taking away a child's toys for misbehaving).

➡ **Leonard Bloomfield** was a highly influential American linguist who had a huge impact on the discipline by adhering strictly to Behaviorism, particularly in later work. Like other

behaviorists, he strongly opposed the study of unobservable mental processes in language analysis. He argued that linguistics should focus entirely on observable speech behavior and the contextual variables that cause it. Bloomfield's behaviorist view of language acquisition saw it as a process of habit formation involving imitation, repetition, and reinforcement of accurate verbal responses to environmental stimuli. Bloomfield's behaviorist viewpoint was a pillar of American Structuralism during its ascendant time. His emphasis on objectivity, observable evidence, and formal analysis influenced linguistic methodology in the United States for many years. His fundamental work, Language (1933), is a significant text representing this approach.

One of the major concerns of Bloomfield is to give linguistics a similar character to that of the natural sciences, which explicitly considers an epistemological model. To do this, Bloomfield proposes to eliminate all mentalist or psychological studies of language, focusing on materials and mechanical aspects, that is, language is conceived by Bloomfield as a visible human behaviour. Behaviours are described in terms of response and pair of stimulus on typical situations and that is why Bloomfield is considered a representative of behaviourism. which has had expressions in various social sciences and humanities. Behaviourism requires Bloomfield to reformulate the place of semantic within linguistics, since this conception of language does not have place for any kind of concept or mental image (the definition of significance of Saussure): all that can be seen is a set of stimuli and reactions that occur in certain situations. Bloomfield accepts the Saussure premise that language study involves studying the correlation between sound and meaning, but technically, the meaning is too difficult to "see", so you should be outside the scope of linguistics.

In essence, behaviorism established a powerful and important framework for comprehending how learning occurs through contextual interactions. While succeeding cognitive perspectives have widened its rigorous focus on observable behavior, its key ideas of conditioning and reinforcement continue to be fundamental to our understanding of how we learn and adapt to the environment around us.

The Mentalist school

Chomsky's work in linguistics started a cognitive revolution, directly challenging the prevalent behaviorist paradigm and pushing for the critical importance of innate mental structures in language learning and usage. In this context, consider mentalism to be a perspective that stresses the importance of internal mental states, structures, and processes in interpreting human behavior, particularly language. It is in sharp contrast to behaviorism's emphasis on visible stimuli and responses.

Noam Chomsky's mentalism offered a significant break from behaviorist explanations of language, emphasizing the critical role of fundamental mental processes, particularly Universal Grammar, in language acquisition and usage. His work launched a cognitive revolution, dramatically altering linguistics, psychology, and other disciplines. While his views have been contested and developed over time, his core discovery that people have an innate capacity for language remains a cornerstone of our knowledge of the human mind and the astonishing ability to communicate.

The mentalist school was founded by Noam Chomsky, according to whom language reveals that there is a good reason to believe in the existence of mind. He is deeply inspired by the rationalist view of language represented by Descartes and the Port Royal Grammarians who stressed the role of reason in the discussion of topics like the philosophy of mind and language acquisition. Thus for Chomsky, reasoning not experience is crucial since knowledge comes from the mind, not from the activity or events that affect one in some way. In other words, language is based on a reasoned structure common to all mankind. Chomsky is also known for his anti-behaviourist tendency, he does not agree that language is part of human behaviour, but that language is "a mirror of the mind" in the sense that by understanding language structure and language acquisition, we may eventually be able to explain how the mind operates, i.e. by studying languages in detail, one may understand better how the language faculty of the human mind operates.

According to Chomsky, linguistics should reach two main goals: a) a theory of language and b) a theory of language acquisition. A theory of language will aim to characterize what language is, its essential properties that distinguish it from other means of communication, the similarities and differences between all the languages of the world. A theory of language acquisition will seek to discover the way children acquire their native language.

In order to attain a theory of language, the linguist must start by describing particular languages in detail, that is, by giving detailed grammars of individual languages. This is called "particular grammar". The next stage is to formulate the general (or universal) features shared by all languages. This is called "universal grammar".

A grammar, in Chomsky's view, is a systematic description of the competence of the native speaker of a language which enables him to produce, understand, and pronounce all the possible sentences of his language. Competence, which is our unconscious knowledge of language, is contrasted by Chomsky with performance, which is the actual use of language or the realization in different situations of the linguistic rules we have acquired unconsciously as children.

1. Syntactic structures

Chomsky first introduced his theory of language in two versions or models named "old version" and "new version". The first version is introduced in his book "syntactic structures" published in 1957. Chomsky suggested that Bloomfieldian linguistics was both far too ambitious and far too limited in scope. It was too ambitious in that it was unrealistic to expect to be able to lay down full proof rules for extracting a perfect description of a language from a mass of data (revolution against discovery procedures). It was too limited because it concentrated above all on describing sets of utterances which had already been spoken (but language has an infinite number of utterances). A grammar he claimed should be more than a catalogue of old utterances, it should also take into account possible future utterances. Every person who knows a language must have the grammar of that language inside him somewhere, a store of knowledge which enables him to produce and comprehend an infinite number of new sentences/utterances.

A grammar which describes actual utterances is a descriptive grammar. A grammar which consists of a set of statements or rules that specify which sequences of language are possible and which impossible is a Generative Grammar. Chomsky therefore initiated the era of Generative Linguistics. In his words a grammar will be a "device" which generates all the grammatical sequences of a language and none of the ungrammatical ones. Such grammar must also be perfectly "explicit". The rules must be precisely formulated in such a way that anyone would be able to separate the well-formed sentences from ill-formed ones.

A) Theory of Language Acquisition

Chomsky and his mentalist followers claim that a child learns his first language through cognitive learning. He also acquires it by natural exposure. Both 'nature' and 'nurture' influence the acquisition of language in children. Chomsky regards linguistics as a subfield of psychology, more especially the cognitive psychology.

Chomsky argues that language is so complex that it is almost incredible that it can be acquired by a child in a short time. He further says that a child is born with some innate mental capacity which helps the child to process all the language which he hears. This is called the "Language Acquisition Device" (LAD). Chomsky and his followers claim that language is governed by rules, and is not a haphazard thing, as Skinner and his followers would claim. We must remember that when Chomsky talks about rules, he means the unconscious rules in a child's mind. A child constructs his own mental grammar which is a part of his cognitive framework. These rules enable him to produce grammatical sentences in his own language. Chomsky does not mean that a child can describe these rules explicitly. For instance, a four or five years old child can produce a sentence like, I have taken meal, he can do that because he has a 'mental grammar' which enables him to form correct present perfect structures and also to use such structures in the right or appropriate situation.

Chomsky suggests that the learner of any language has an inbuilt learning capacity for language that enables each learner to construct a kind of personal theory or set of rules about the language based on very limited exposure to language.

B) Universal Grammar

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C) Transformational Generative Grammar

TGG is a system of language analysis that recognizes the relationship among the various elements of a sentence and among the possible sentences of a language and uses processes or rules (some of which are called transformations) to express these relationships. For example, TGG relates the active sentence "John read a book" with its corresponding passive "the book was read by John".

Although sets such as these active and passive sentences appear to be very different of the surface (in such things as word order), a TG tries to show that in the underlying structure (in their deeper relations to one another), the sentences are very similar. TG assigns a "deep structure" and a "surface structure" to show the relationship of such sentences. The notion of deep structure can be especially helpful in explaining ambiguous utterances.

Example:

"Flying airplanes can be dangerous" may have a deep structure or meaning like "airplanes can be dangerous when they fly" or "to fly airplanes can be dangerous".

Transformations were considered in "Syntactic Structures" to be of two types: obligatory and optional. The set of obligatory transformations is that whose application was necessary in every derivation of the sentences of the language. If the resulting sequence was to be grammatical, for example, in English, every grammatical sequence must undergo the number agreement transformation, the transformation whose function is to ensure subject-verb agreement is said to be obligatory.

Examples:

1. The boy see the ball. (ungrammatical)
2. The boy sees the ball. (number agreement)
1. He threw out it. (ungrammatical)
2. He threw it out. (article movement)

The set of remaining transformations, those that are not obligatory constituted the set of optional transformations. Thus, A and B versions of the following examples are related to each other by an optional transformations.

➤ **Deep structure and Surface structure**

Chomsky's solution to the problem of sentence structure and meaning is to suggest that every sentence has two levels of structure, one which is obvious on the surface, and another which is deep and abstract. So, we might be dealing with sentences which have a similar surface structure but different deep structures, or when two different surface structures share a common deep structure. Thus, it is necessary to link these two levels in some way. Chomsky suggested that deep structures are related to surface structures by processes called transformations. A deep structure is transformed into its related surface structure by the application of one or more transformations.

If you want to analyze the relation of these following sentences, first you need to know about the deep structure of them, since deep structure is the input of transformation rules:

You close the door.

The door is closed by you.

Close the door!

2. Chomsky vs. Behaviourism: A Linguistic Showdown

The theories proposed by Chomsky stand in stark contrast to the behaviorist perspective on language acquisition. While behaviorism posits that language development is primarily driven by external stimuli and reinforced through behavioral conditioning, Chomsky's perspective is rooted in innate knowledge and universal grammatical principles.

Chomsky's critique of behaviorist theories, such as those proposed by B.F. Skinner, centers on their inability to account for the complex and creative nature of language. He argues that behavioral reinforcement alone cannot sufficiently explain the rapidity and precision with which children acquire their native language. Instead, he suggests that children possess an innate language acquisition mechanism, which enables them to naturally grasp the underlying grammatical structures of any language they are exposed to.

The key difference between Chomsky's theory and Skinner's behaviorist approach lies in the emphasis on internal knowledge versus external conditioning. Chomsky argues that language acquisition is not solely dependent on external factors, but rather on the innate ability of the human brain to acquire grammatical categories and syntactic rules. In contrast, behaviorism focuses on the role of external stimuli and behavioral reinforcement in shaping language development.

Noam Chomsky's mentalism represented a significant break from behaviorist explanations of language, emphasizing the importance of innate mental processes, specifically Universal Grammar, in language acquisition and usage. His work launched a cognitive revolution, dramatically altering linguistics, psychology, and other disciplines. While his views have been contested and developed over time, his core discovery that people have an innate capacity for language remains a cornerstone of our knowledge of the human mind and the astonishing ability to communicate.

The Functionalist school

Functionalism distinguishes itself by emphasizing the social and communicative functions of language. It investigates why language is formed the way it is, emphasizing on the roles it plays in human interaction. Consider functionalism to be a philosophy that sees language as a social semiotic system, a resource for meaning creation. Its organization is not arbitrary or exclusively determined by innate mental structures, but rather formed by the various functions it plays in social circumstances. Thus, functionalism emphasizes the social and communicative roles of language.

Functionalism in linguistics, as a broad approach, includes the work of both the Prague and London Schools, while their concepts were developed with different emphases and theoretical frameworks. Both schools shared a core commitment to interpreting language in terms of its functions and importance in communication and social life, as opposed to more formalist approaches that valued abstract grammatical patterns.

➤ The Prague school

The circle's roots can be dated back as far as 1911 when Vilém Mathésius who was to become an important member of the circle, independently of and without having any connection with De Saussure, predicted the synchronic study of lge. The preoccupations and the research of its members did not emerge out of nothing, they set out with a solid

foundation behind them. The forerunners of the Prague Linguistic Circle had been De Saussure's "Course in General Linguistics" and the Moscow Linguistic Circle founded in 1915. The members of the Moscow Linguistic circle were interested in and also dealt with problems regarding language and linguistics. The sources on which its members' studies were based on De Saussure's and Baudouin de Courtenay's works. Due to historical background and events which occurred there, the members of the Moscow linguistic circle were forced to leave Russia and to continue their activity elsewhere.

Combination of Structuralism and Functionalism

As regards linguistics, the members of the circle laid down as the basis for further research, important concepts and theories such as the approach to the study of language as a synchronic system, the functionality of elements of language and the importance of the social function of language. In the field of linguistics, they were influenced by De Saussure and by his incipient structuralism. Structuralism is unanimously believed to have appeared in 1916 when De Saussure's "Course in General Linguistics" was published. He left a legacy which greatly influenced linguistics in general and members of the Prague Circle in particular.

The Prague members approached language systematically and structurally and they defined language as a system of signs. In studying language, the Prague scholars took into account and attached a great importance to external factors (political, social and geographical factors). A strong emphasis was laid on the functions of language in the act of communication and the role of language in society. Linguists of the Prague Circle stressed the functionality of elements within language, the contrast of language elements to one another and the total pattern or system formed by these contrasts, and they had distinguished themselves in the study of sound system.

Prague structuralism is functionalistic. Functionalism represents approaching language from the perspective of the functions performed by it (language). The Prague school becomes famous for its interest in the application of functionalism, the study of how elements of a language accomplish cognition, expression and conation. This combination of structuralism with functionalism is yet another contribution to modern linguistics.

➤ **The London School**

The London School, associated with figures like J.R. Firth and later Michael Halliday, placed a strong emphasis on the social context of language use as the primary determinant of meaning. Firth's famous dictum, "You shall know a word by the company it keeps," highlights the importance of collocation and context in understanding meaning.

The London school refers to the kind of linguistic scholarship in England, a country that has both an unusually long history in linguistics and peculiar features in modern linguistics. The man who turned linguistics proper into a recognized distinct academic subject in Britain was J.R.Firth (1890_1960), the first Professor of general linguistics in Great Britain (1944). Firth was influenced by the anthropologist B.Malinowski (1884_1942). In turn, he influenced his student, the well-known linguist M.A.K. Halliday. The three men all stressed the importance of context of situation and the system aspect of language. Thus, the London school is also known as Systemic linguistic.

1- Malinowski's theory

Malinowski was a professor of Anthropology at the London School of Economics from 1927 onwards. The most important aspect of his theorizing, as distinct from his purely ethnographic work, concerned the functioning of language. For Malinowski, to think of language as a means of transfusing ideas from the head of the speaker to that of the listener was a misleading myth. He said that language is to be regarded as a mode of action, rather than a counterpart of thought. According to him, the meaning of an utterance does not come from the ideas of the words comprising it but from its relation to the situational context in which the utterance occurs.

Malinowski believed that utterances and situation are bound up inextricably with each other and the context of situation is indispensable for the understanding of the words. The meaning of spoken utterances could always be determined by the context of situation. He distinguished three types of context of situation.

- 1. Situations in which speech interrelates with bodily activity: *The meaning of a word is not given by the physical properties of its referent, but by its function. In learning the meaning of a word, the process is not accompanied by explanation but by learning to handle it. Likewise, a verb, a word for action, receives its meaning through an active participation in the action.*
- 2. Narrative situations: *Malinowski further distinguished “the situation of the moment of narration” and “the situation referred to by the narrative.” The first case is made up of the respective social, intellectual and emotional attitudes of those present, and the second case derive its meaning from the context referred to (as in fairy tale).*
- 3. Situation in which speech is used to fill a speech vacuum phatic communion: *Cases of language used in free, aimless, social intercourse, such use of language is not the least related to human activities, and its meaning cannot possibly come from sociability and The fact of personal communion of these people. For example, the function of a polite utterance has nothing to do with the meaning of the words in it. Malinowski called such utterances “phatic communion”.*

2- Firth's theory

Influenced by Malinowski, Firth regarded language as a social process, as a means of social life, rather than simply as a set of agreed-upon, semiotics and signals. He insisted that the object of linguistic study is language in actual use and the goal of linguistic inquiry is to analyze meaningful elements of language in order to establish corresponding relations between linguistic and non-linguistic elements the methods of linguistic study is to decide on the composite elements of language, explain their relations on various levels and ultimately explicate the internal relations between these elements and human activities in the environment of language.

Firth held that meaning is use, thus defining meaning as the relationship between an element at any level and its context on that level. According to his theorizing, the meaning of any sentence consists of five parts:

1_ the relationship of each phoneme to its phonetic context.

2_ the relationship of each lexical item to the others in the sentence.

3_ the morphological relations of each word.

4_ the sentence type of which the given sentence is an example.

5_ the relationship of the sentence to its context of situation.

Firth's own study focused on the context of situation as Malinowski did. He defined the context of situation as including the entire cultural setting of speech and the personal history of the participants rather than as simply the context of human activity going on at the moment.

Long before the distinction between semantics and pragmatics had been established, Firth argued for the context of situation in the communication of meaning. Social status, setting, level of formality, and cultural tradition to the context in which language is used, and crucially, they affect the linguistic forms we choose when speaking. The linguistic context is also significant, since certain words habitually co-occur, or collocate.

Firth tried to set up a model for illustrating the close relationship between language use and the context of situation which contains the following components:

1. The relevant features of the participants: persons, personalities.

A: the verbal action of the participants.

B: the nonverbal action of the participants.

2. The relevant objects.

3: the effects of the verbal action.

Firth made more specific and more detailed contextual analyses. He put forward the idea that in analyzing a typical context of situation, one has to carry out the analysis on the following levels:

1. The internal relation of the text

A. the syntagmatic relation between the elements in the structure.

B. the paradigmatic relation between units of the system.

2. The internal relation of the context of situation

A. the relation between text and nonlinguistic elements.

B. the analytical relation between “bits” and “pieces” of the text (words, parts of words, phrases) And the special elements within the context (items, objects, persons, personalities, events).

3- Halliday and the systemic-Functional Grammar

M.A.K.Halliday has developed the idea stemming from Firth’s theories in the London School. His systemic-Functional Grammar is a sociologically oriented functional linguistic approach. Systemic-Functional Grammar has two components; systemic Grammar and Functional Grammar.

➤ *Systemic Grammar:*

The system is a list of choices that are available in the grammar of a language the number system in English, for example, contains two choices: singular and plural. The person system offers three choices, first person, second person, and third person. There are also systems of gender, tense and mood, etc .

A system is a list of things between which it is possible to choose. So they are meanings, which the grammar can distinguish. The items in a system are called options. And the items of a particular system have something in common, belonging to the same area of meaning. For instance, singular and plural are distinct, but they both have to do with number. All systems have 3 essential characteristics:

Firstly, the terms in a system are mutually exclusive.

Secondly, a system is finite. It is possible to fix a limit for a system and to say that it consists of a certain countable number of items, no more, and no less.

Thirdly, the meaning of each item in a system depends on the meaning of the other items in the system. If the meaning of one term is changed, the meaning of the other items will change.

➤ *2. Functional Grammar:*

Functional aspect is also termed as sociosemantics. According to Halliday, the context of situation or the social context contains three components:

Field of discourse: the subject matter being discussed.

Tenor of discourse: the social relations between the participants.

Mode of discourse: the channel of communication.

These three situational components are related to three important functions of language identified by Halliday: ideational, interpersonal and textual. Language serves for the expression of content (ideational): language serves to establish and maintain social relations (interpersonal): language enables people to construct texts (textual). These three functions are related to three grammatical systems: transitivity, mood and theme.

2.1. Interpersonal function:

It is concerned with the interaction between speaker and addressee the grammatical resources for enacting social roles in general and speech roles in particular i.e. for establishing, changing, and maintaining interpersonal relations.

2.2. Ideational function:

It is concerned with "ideation", grammatical resources for constructing our experience of the world around and inside us. This function is analyzed in terms of transitivity system i.e. a choice between the six processes and the participants and circumstances associated with those processes. A clause in its ideational function is a means of representing patterns of experience i.e. to build a mental picture of reality. This is what people employ to make sense of their experience of what goes on around them and inside them; these going-on (processes) are sorted out in the semantic system of the language and expressed through the grammar

of the clause. The system that works out the types of process and hence participants in the process and circumstances as associated with the process is known as the Transitivity system.

2.3. Textual Function:

It is concerned with the creation of text with the presentation of ideational and interpersonal meaning as information that can be shared by speaker and listener in text unfolding in context. This function consists of two sub-functions Theme and Rheme.

➤ *-Theme and Rheme*

Theme : *the element which serves as the point of departure : it is that with which the clause is concerned. As a general guide, the theme can be identified as the element which come in first position in the clause.*

Rheme: *the part in which the theme is developed, the remainder of the message, is called the Rheme. Eg: the shoe was lost.*

In essence, Functionalism in linguistics is a perspective that sees language primarily as a tool for social interaction and communication. It emphasizes that language's structure is determined by its purposes, concentrating on how linguistic features are employed to achieve communication goals in a variety of social settings. Functionalism, as opposed to strictly formal methods, focuses on understanding why language is the way it is by looking at what it does for its users. This perspective, which incorporates the work of both the Prague and London Schools (particularly Halliday's Systemic Functional Linguistics), emphasizes the critical role of context and meaning-making in defining linguistic systems and choices.