



AS and A LEVEL

ENGLISH LANGUAGE

H070/H470 For first teaching in 2015

Glossary of Terms and Main Language Theories

Version 1

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Glossary of Terms and Main Language Theories

Please note that OCR are providing this glossary to offer some guidance. If other terms that perform a similar function are used by the student, they would not be penalised in any way for using terms not included in this Glossary.

The Glossary has been developed from the student coursebook and Delivery Guides that are on the OCR GCE English Language webpage.



A

Abstract nouns

refer to ideas and concepts that only exist in the mind

Accent

the distinct pronunciation patterns of a group of people

Accommodation

where a speaker adapts to another speaker's <u>accent</u>, <u>dialect</u> or <u>sociolect</u>

Acronomy

abbreviation using the first letter of a group of words and pronounced as a single word. eg OPEC, NASA, RAM

Active voice

<u>clause</u> construction where the subject is also the actor (they are doing or have done something to somebody/something)

Adjacency pair

a pair of utterances in a conversation that go together (greeting and reply, question and answer, etc.)

Adjective

a word that modifies a noun (e.g. 'the orange sky')

Adverb

a word that modifies a <u>verb</u> telling you how, where or when an action takes place; can also modify <u>adjectives</u>, telling you how much (e.g. 'I am really delighted')

Adverbial

words. phrases or <u>clauses</u> which act as adverbs and which identify where, when and how when modifying the <u>verb</u>.

Affordance

linguistic and behavioural choices provided by technology

Agenda setting

where a speaker sets up the main topic of conversation

Analogical overextension

associating objects which are unrelated but which have one or more features in common (e.g. both being the same colour)

Anchored relationship

an online relationship where two participants know each other in the offline world

Article

a determiner such as 'a' or 'the'

Asymmetrical power

an imbalance of power between people

Asynchronous:

unlike <u>synchronous</u>, there is a delay between utterance and response. Responses posted on a forum, which may occur months or even years after the original post, are an example of discourse that is asynchronous

Audience

the person or people reading or hearing the text

Auxiliary verb

assists the main <u>verb</u>; primary auxiliary verbs do, have and be denote changes of tense

Avatar

an image used by a user that accompanies a username

В

Backchannelling

supportive terms such as 'oh' and 'really'

Bald on-record

where a speaker is completely blunt and direct (e.g. 'Sit down!')

Bias

a form of prejudice in favour of or against an idea, person or group, expressed through language/images and so on. It can take obvious or implicit forms, or a mixture of the two, and can arise from what is omitted as well as from what is stated or shown

Bidialectalism

a speaker's ability to use two dialects of the same language



C

Categorical overextension

the most commonly occurring form of <u>overextension</u> in a child's language, and relates to confusing a <u>hypernym</u> (broad category, e.g. fruit) with a <u>hyponym</u> (specific example)

Catenative

chain-like structure in a sentence ('so we... and then... and then we...')

Chaining

a speaker responds and sets up the other speaker's next utterance in a chain that runs on past an <u>adjacency pair</u>

Child-directed speech (CDS)

speech patterns used by parents and carers when communicating with young children

Clause

a structural unit that contains at least one <u>subject</u> and one <u>verb</u> it can include other features as well such as <u>object</u>, <u>complement</u> and <u>adverbial</u>.

Closer

spoken expressions which are designed to close

Codification

a process of standardizing a language

Cohesion

the many parts of a text that help to draw it together into a recognizable whole. (For example, the headline, picture and caption in a news article will all have words/images that link together in terms of the meaning and subject matter of the article.)

Collocation

two or more words that are often found together in a group or phrase with a distinct meaning (e.g. 'over the top', 'fish and chips', 'back to front')

Comparative adjective

the form of an <u>adjective</u> that designates comparison between two things, generally made by adding the suffix -er to its base form (e.g. 'this is a faster car')

Complement

a <u>clause</u> element that tells you more about the <u>subject</u> or the <u>object</u>

Complex sentence

has two or more <u>clauses</u>, one of which is a <u>subordinate clause</u>

Compound

a word formed from two other words (e.g. 'dustbin')

Compound sentence

has two or more <u>clauses</u>, usually joined to the main clause by the <u>conjunctions</u> 'and' or 'but' and depends on the main clause to exist

Compound-complex sentence

a sentence that has three or more <u>clauses</u>, one of which will be a <u>subordinate clause</u> and one of which will be a <u>coordinate clause</u>

Concrete nouns

refer to things we touch or can experience physically (e.g. snow, butter)

Conditioning

the process by which humans (and animals) are taught or trained to respond, and learn by positive reinforcement (e.g. praise from an adult) for whatever is deemed to be appropriate learning within that specific context – for choosing the correct word or for politeness for example

Conjunction

a word that joins <u>clauses</u> together

Connotation

the associated meanings we have with certain words, depending on the person reading or hearing the word, and on the <u>context</u> in which the word appears

Consonant clusters

groups of consonants (e.g. 'str' or 'gl') that demand more muscular control than single consonants or vowels, so tend to appear later in the baby's utterances

Constraints

linguistic and behavioural restrictions provided by technology

Context

where, when and how a text is produced or received

Convergence

where a speaker moves towards another speaker's <u>accent</u>, <u>dialect</u> or <u>sociolect</u>

Cooing

sounds a baby will make like 'goo' and 'ga-ga', generally around the age of 6–8 weeks. It is believed that during this period the child is discovering their vocal chords.

Coordinate clause

a <u>clause</u> beginning with a <u>coordinating conjunction</u> and is essentially a main clause joined to another main clause

Coordinating conjunctions

these signal the start of a coordinate clause

Copular verb

a <u>verb</u> that takes a <u>complement (</u>such as 'seems', 'appears' or a form of the verb to be – 'is', 'was', 'are', etc.)

Corpus

a collection of written texts

Covert prestige

describes high social status through use of non-standard forms

D

Declarative

a statement – a type of sentence which gives information and where the <u>subject</u> typically comes in front of the <u>verb</u> ('Two fish are in a tank.')

Definite article 'the'

Deixis

terms that point towards something and place the words in <u>context</u>

Denotation

the literal, generally accepted, dictionary definition of a word

Determiner words determining the number or status of the <u>noun</u>

Diachronic change

refers to the study of historical language occurring over a period

Dialect

a non-standard variety of a language, including <u>lexis</u> and <u>grammar</u>, particular to a region

Digital technology

the technique of storing, transmitting and processing data used for mobile phones and computers among others

Direct object

the part of the <u>clause</u> that is directly acted upon by the <u>subject</u>

Discourse

describes the structure of any text (or segment of text) that is longer than a single sentence

Discourse marker

marks a change in direction in an extended piece of written or spoken text (e.g. 'nevertheless', 'to sum up')

Discourse structure

the way a text is structured, according to the typical features of the text's <u>genre</u>

Dismissal formula

a device used to close a conversation

Dispreferred response

a response that is unexpected, although not necessarily rude if phrased appropriately (e.g.: Speaker A: Dinner's ready at 7. / Speaker B: Not dinner, I've only just had breakfast!)

Divergence

where a speaker actively distances himself/herself from another speaker by accentuating their own <u>accent</u> or <u>dialect</u>

Downward convergence

making your accent or lexis more informal



Ε

Empirical approach

gaining knowledge by direct and indirect observation or experience

Estuary English

a <u>dialect</u> of English that is perceived to have spread outwards from London along the South East of England. It has features of <u>Received Pronunciation</u> and London English

Etymology

the history of a word, including the language it came from, if appropriate, and when it began to be regularly used

Exophoric reference

a reference to something, often cultural, beyond the text

Extra-linguistic variables

factors that affect the way you speak (e.g. age, where you live, etc.)

F

Feral children

children who are raised without human intervention ('feral' means existing in a natural/wild state, as opposed to domesticated). There are examples of children having been raised by animals such as dogs.

Field

words used in a text which relate to the text's subject matter (e.g. the field of medicine; the field of golf, etc.)

Flaming

making an offensive and insulting post in a chatroom

Flouts a maxim

where someone obviously does not obey the conversational <u>maxims</u> that have been suggested by Grice.

Formality

describes the degree to which texts stick to certain conventions and to how impersonal they are. The more spoken features a text has the more informal it will tend to be.

Framing

controlling the agenda of a conversation (its direction and subject); or making utterances that encourage a child to fill in the blanks

French/Latinate lexis

words derived from French or Latin, or both that are more rarely used; often seen as having a higher status and/or being more specialist

G

Genre

the kind of text you have in front of you (advert, speech, song)

Gestural

a way of communicating that relates to movement and/or body language, either instead of words or (as would be likely in a <u>multimodal</u> media text) in addition to them

Glottal stops

a form of stop consonant made at the back of the throat to replace the 't' sound (e.g. 'wha? instead of 'what')

Grammar

the building blocks of sentences (words, phrases, <u>clauses</u>, etc.) and how they go together to mean something to the reader or listener

Grammarian

a scholar of grammar

Grapheme-phoneme relationship

the correspondence between the written shape of a letter and its sound



Η

Head noun

the main noun at the centre of a noun phrase

High-frequency lexis

words that appear often in everyday speech

Holophrase

a single word representing a more complex thought generally created by a child. For example, the word 'juice' may be used to signify'l want some juice' – in this context, 'juice' would be a holophrase. 'Up' is another commonly used holophrase, usually signifying 'please lift me up' or 'l want to get up'

Hospitality token

a polite utterance relating to context designed to put speakers at their ease

Hyperlink

an electronic link embedded in a text that takes the reader to another website

Hypernyms

categories (e.g. pets, vehicles and sweets) are all hypernyms

Hyponyms

examples within categories (e.g. pony, truck and sherbet lemons) are all hyponyms

Idiom

a form of common non-literal expression (e.g. 'I was dead on my feet')

Idiolect

your own individual way of speaking

Illocutionary act

implying something in what we say

Imperative

a command – a type of sentence where the <u>subject</u> is usually left out and the <u>verb</u> is in its bare form ('Give the hat to me.')

Indefinite article

'a' or 'an'

Indirect object

receives the action

Inflection

an ending such as -ed, -s or -ing added to change a tense or number, or in the case of nouns to make a plural

Infographic

(also micro infographic) a graphical format which can also be animated to display information (e.g. in mini blogs)

Initialism

abbreviation using the first letter of a group of words and pronounced separately. eg FBI, CIA, DVD

Interrogative

a question – a type of sentence indicated by the swapping round of <u>subject</u> and <u>verb</u> ('Are you happy?' rather than 'You are happy.'), by the use of question words (who, what, where, when, how), or simply by the use of a question mark ('You're coming by train?')

Intertextuality/intertextual reference

a subtle reference to another text that helps to create a sense of shared <u>context</u> and can operate on a pragmatic level, creating a sense of imagined closeness between writer/producer and reader/recipient

Intonation

the pitch (how high or low you are in your vocal range)

Irregular verbs

change their form when changing from present to past tense (e.g. 'swim'/'swam')

Isogloss

the divisions that linguists draw between regions according to different <u>dialects</u>

J

Juxtaposition

the placement of two contrasting ideas or thing next to each other. This could operate within modes (e.g. words being used together, perhaps in an unexpected combination or for emphasis – 'Babies in Drug Error') or it could operate across <u>modes</u> within a <u>multimodal</u> text (e.g. a blogger including a distinctive personal <u>avatar</u> every time they post)



Labelling

the process of attaching words to objects; as the child learns more about the world their capacity to connect words with an increasing range of objects grows

Labov's narrative categories

a way of breaking down the typical <u>discourse structure</u> of a spoken story

Language academies

bodies established by governments in countries such as France and Italy to prescribe the 'correct' form of the language

Language acquisition device (LAD)

a term coined by <u>Chomsky</u> to denote the inherent capacity of humans for learning language

Language acquisition support system (LASS)

the support provided by parents and other carers to the child's language development

Left-branching sentence

has the subordinate clause or clauses before the main clause

Lexical field

identifies the main subject matter of a text (e.g. food in a recipe, money in an article on economics)

Lexicon

the vocabulary of a language

Lexis

words and their origins

Linear

a text in which the <u>discourse</u> is organized into some sort of sequence (e.g. a narrative with a beginning, middle and an end). There may be an implied expectation that the reader will read the text in the order in which it appears

Loanword

an English word that has come into use having been 'borrowed' from another language

Locutionary act

saying something

Low-frequency lexis

words that appear more rarely, such as specialist terms from a field, e.g. medicine

Μ

Main clause

a clause that can stand on its own grammatically

Main verb

the <u>verb</u> that carries the main meaning or process in a verb phrase (and therefore in a <u>clause</u>/sentence)

Mainstream dialect

the dialect that spans the whole English nation

Manner

used to express how formal or informal a text is

Manner maxim

a co-operative principle relating to what you say so that you avoid being obscure or ambiguous and be orderly

Marked

refers to words that are ascribed less prestige than the standard or unmarked form

Metatalk

explicit talk about grammar and language

Minor sentence

a sentence that has some missing elements, such as the <u>subject</u> or the <u>verb</u>, making it technically ungrammatical

Mixed mode

features of speech and writing in the same text

Modal auxiliary verb

a sub-category of <u>auxiliary verb</u> that expresses degrees of possibility, probability, necessity or obligation

Mode

texts can be in spoken mode (e.g. spontaneous conversation between friends) or written mode (e.g. an English essay) or mixed mode (e.g. a political speech will be written but delivered as speech)

Modification

description in the form of words, phrases or whole <u>clauses</u> that alters our understanding of the thing described

Modifier

any word that describes a <u>noun</u> (can be an <u>adjective</u>, <u>adverb</u> or <u>noun</u>)

Morphological derivation

the process of creating a new word out of an old word or affix (e.g. the suffix -ly changes <u>adjectives</u> into <u>adverbs</u> – 'nice' becomes 'nicely')

Multimodal

a text that uses more than one <u>mode</u>; often used for texts that have a combination of text and images

Ν

Negative <u>face</u>

our desire to avoid doing something we don't want to do, such as giving money to a stranger. This is part of Goffman's ideas about face.

Negative politeness

a more indirect, hedged approach, often using negative constructions (e.g. 'You couldn't take the bin out for me, could you?') This is linked to theories of <u>face</u>'.

Neologism

a newly formed or coined word

Network building

having labelled objects, children start to identify connections between them, recognizing similarities and differences

Neutral comment

speaker makes a comment on something neutral in the surroundings like the weather

Nonce formation

a 'nonsense' new word that is created for a special occasion (e.g. just before lunch 'feeling hungryish' might be used)

Non-finite subordinate clause

<u>clauses</u> in which the verb is not 'finished' and the tense is therefore not shown (e.g. clauses with to- infinitives like 'to buy some cheese' or with an -ing form of the verb such as in 'running down the road')

Non-linear

a text with no expected sequence for reading – the cohesion may be less obvious and this may be reflected in the layout (e.g. more use may be made of features such as text boxes and hyperlinks than if the text was linear)

Noun phrase

a group of words with a noun at the centre of it

Nouns

words which name people, places, things, ideas and concepts:

Number homophones

where numbers are used to replace all or part of a word whose sound they resemble, usually within the context of an electronic text (e.g. '2' for 'to' or 'gr8' for 'great')

0

Object

this normally receives the action and comes after the verb

Object permanence

the ability of a baby to recognize that an object still exists even when the baby cannot actually see it, thus it requires the capacity to form a mental representation of the object

Off-record

in conversation where no threat is made to someone's <u>face</u> ('This room's pretty messy, isn't it?')

Opener

expressions which open a conversation ('so, what are you holiday plans this summer?)

Orthographical

the methodology for writing a language including features such as spelling, punctuation, hyphenation, etc.

Orthography

the spelling convention of a language

Other-related comment

speaker comments about another speaker (e.g. 'You look like you need a drink')

Overextension

widening the meaning of a word so that it extends to apply not just to the actual object but also to other objects with similar properties or functions.

Over-generalization

the over application of rules about the formation of words

Overt prestige

refers to a dialect used by a culturally powerful group



Ρ

Pace

the speed at which you talk

Packaging

in trying to ascertain the boundaries of the label the child sometimes confuses <u>hypernyms</u> and <u>hyponyms</u>, giving rise to over- and underextensions

Passive voice

<u>clause</u> construction where the <u>subject</u> is not the actor (they have had or are having something done to them)

Periodic sentence

a <u>complex sentence</u> in which the main <u>clause</u> is saved until the end (e.g. 'The Minister, who was usually late in the mornings, except on those occasions when she had been working all night, was already at her desk.')

Perlocutionary act

what happens in response to what is said (i.e. what is understood)

Phatic talk

speech which is really just designed to maintain social relationships and does not carry significant meaning, often used to start a conversation (e.g. 'hi there (.) how are you?')

Phonemic contraction

the sounds a child can make are reduced so that they can only make the sounds of their own language

Phonemic expansion

an increase in the variety of sounds a child can produce

Phonetics

the study of how we produce particular sounds (e.g. 't' and 'd' are stop consonants, produced by stopping the flow of air at the alveolar ridge, just behind the top teeth)

Phonology

the study of the sound system in the language and the effects of its particular features (i.e. looking at consonants, vowels, rhythms, <u>stresses</u>, <u>pace</u>)

Polysemic

describes a word with more than one meaning (e.g. 'set' can refer to 'a set of cutlery', 'a tennis set', what happens to jelly and so on)

Polysemy

many meanings in a word

Positive <u>face</u>

our need to maintain self-esteem. Positive is threatened when we are criticised in any way

Positive reinforcement

when a behaviour is rewarded and therefore encouraged to be repeated

Possessive determiner

determiner which shows who the <u>noun</u> belongs to (e.g. my book)

Positive politeness

an informal approach that assumes the other party will agree ('I think that just about wraps it up, don't you?') This is linked to theories of face'.

Post-modified

the modification that comes after the head <u>noun</u> (or after a phrase or clause)

Post-telegraphic stage

in the post-telegraphic stage, the child's early reliance on lexical (content) words gradually expands to include <u>auxiliaries</u>, <u>prepositions</u> and <u>articles</u>, e.g. 'Mummy car' evolves into 'Mummy is in the car'. Timing of this shift varies, but 30 months (approximately) is likely

Pragmatic failure

where the meaning that is implied is not the meaning that is understood by the listener

Pragmatics

what we really mean by what we say or write in a given context OR can refer to the contextual aspects of language use

Predicate overextension

conveying meaning that relates to absence (e.g. making the utterance 'cat' when looking at the cat's empty basket)

Pre-modified

modification that comes before the head <u>noun</u> (or before a phrase or <u>clause</u>)

Preposition

a word which shows how elements in a sentence or <u>clause</u> relate to each other in time or space

Pre-start

a word or phrase made to clear the air before a turn begins (e.g. 'Well...')

Primary verbs

be, have, do

Privation

the absence of social relationships

Productive vocabulary

the term used to describe the words a person (not necessarily a child) is able to use, either in speech or writing

Pronoun

a word which stands in place of a <u>noun</u> or <u>noun phrase</u> (usually used to avoid repetition of the noun)

Proper nouns

words for specific people or places (e.g. Swindon)

Prosodics

how we use rhythm, <u>stress</u>, <u>intonation</u> and <u>pace</u> in speech to create particular effects

Proto-words

clusters of sounds (e.g. 'da') that represent the baby's attempt to articulate specific words when their motor coordination is still in early stages of development

Pun

a play on words, often using the multiple meanings of words for effect (e.g. 'A man walks into a bar. "Ouch!"")

Purpose

describes why the text was produced or uttered (to entertain, to persuade, to inform, to advise and so on)

Q

Quality <u>maxim</u>

a co-operative principle that requires that you do not say what you believe to be false

Quantity maxim

a co-operative principle that requires you are careful in what you say, be just as informative as is needed and no more

R

Recasting

the rephrasing and extending of a child's utterance

Received Pronunciation (RP)

a prestige form of English pronunciation

Receptive vocabulary

relates to the words a person recognizes/understands and is likely to be larger than their productive vocabulary

Reduplicated monosyllable

the repetition of a sound such as 'ba ba'

Register

the type or variety of language that the writer or speaker has chosen to use (e.g. formal register, informal register, medical register, academic register, etc.)

Regular verbs

take a regular -ed inflection when changing from present to past tense (e.g. 'walk/walked')

Relation maxim

a co-operative principle that requires that you make what you say relevant to the last speaker's turn

Representation

language used to present an impression of ourselves, or of an event, company or institution (like your school or college) to the wider world

S

Scaffolding

a form of linguistic support whereby adults, through their interactions, provide the child with conversational material and patterning (e.g. the parent may say 'What did we buy at the shop today? Did we buy apples?', thus providing the child with some key <u>lexis</u> and <u>grammar</u> structures, supporting them in continuing the conversation)

Self-related comment

speaker makes a comment about himself/herself (e.g. 'I'm run off my feet')

Semantic field

a pattern of words with similar meanings found across a text or texts (e.g. 'bolt', 'trap', 'cage')

Semantic shift

the change in a meaning of a word

Semantics

meanings of words, both on their own and in relation to other words in the text

Semiotics

the study of signs and symbols; considering not only the ways in which words work and how they are used, but also by considering images, sounds, music, and patterns

Sex/gender

before analysing gender <u>discourses</u>, it is important to determine the difference between sex and gender. Sex refers to biological differences between males and females while gender refers to behaviours which are constructed through early socialization and continues throughout life. This distinction is significant as the analysis of gender and language is informed by issues of power that may arise from people, schools, government and the media

Simple sentence

has only one clause

Sociolect

a variety of language that is characteristic of the social background or status of its user

Stages of CLA

phases that have been identified by linguists, during which particular significant characteristics can be identified

Standardization

the process of forming a uniform language codified in dictionaries, educational and government texts that demands conformity by all variant language forms

Stress

where volume is raised to place emphasis on a particular syllable

Subject

this normally performs the action of the sentence or <u>clause</u> and can be a single word or phrase

Subordinate clause

depends on the main <u>clause</u> to exist

Subordinating conjunctions

these signal the start of a subordinate clause

Superlative adjective

expresses the highest level of the quality represented by the <u>adjective</u>, generally made by adding -est to its base form ('the fastest car')

Synchronicity

events that occur simultaneously, such as communication

Synchronous

at the same time; a face-to-face conversation would be an example of a synchronous discourse

Synonym

a word that has a similar meaning to another word (e.g. 'malady' and 'illness')

Syntax

the order of the elements in a clause or sentence (<u>subject</u>, <u>verb</u>, <u>object</u>, etc.)

Т

Tag question

an <u>interrogative clause</u> added to the end of a <u>declarative</u> to make it into a question (e.g. 'We're meeting for lunch today, aren't we?')

Telegraphic stage

usually associated with language development in infants of approximately 24–36 months, this term refers to speech that resembles an old-fashioned telegram, generally characterized by the omission of <u>auxiliary verbs</u> and <u>determiners</u> and with a focus on lexical essentials (e.g. 'daddy get milk' or 'Ben feed ducks')

Telephony

the working or use of telephones

Topic management

the way topics in a conversation are organised or handed from speaker to speaker - can also be known as <u>agenda setting</u>

Transition relevance place (TRP)

the point at which one turn is ending and another turn is signalled

Turn construction unit (TCU)

a fundamental segment of speech in conversation analysis

Turn-taking

the process of taking turns in a conversation, where only one speaker speaks at a time

Two-word stage

usually occurs around the age of 18 months to two years and refers to the child's ability to start producing utterances which use words in combination. This will often take the form of <u>subject</u> + <u>verb</u> (e.g. 'doggie gone'), but variation of <u>syntax</u> is possible, as the child begins to shape meaning – sometimes using <u>intonation</u> as well – (e.g. 'mummy come' (statement), 'mummy come?' (question) and 'come mummy' (command))

U

Underextension

when the meaning ascribed to a word used by a child which is narrower than the meaning it has in adult language; using a <u>hyponym</u> instead of a <u>hypernym</u> (e.g. a child may use the word 'cat' instead of 'pet')

Upward convergence

changing your <u>accent</u> or <u>lexical</u> choices to something you perceive as more prestigious

V

Valediction

expression of farewell

Verb

the action or state in the sentence or clause (can be a single word or verb phrase)

Vernacular

everyday regional language spoken by people

Vernacular writing

informal, non-standard writing

Violates a maxim

subtle failure of someone to observe a <u>maxim</u> (e.g. going on a bit too long on a topic)

Vocative

directly addressing someone via' to someone in conversation by their name



Theories

Behaviourism

a theory of language acquisition developed by psychologists (most prominently B.F. Skinner), which suggests that language learning was based on mimicry and reinforcement

Cognitive theory

a major proponent of this theory was Piaget, who was interested in children's cognitive development; that is, the way their thought processes change and progressed. Piaget believed that children's linguistic development was linked to their growing understanding of concepts

Construction model

the construction model of language development is a usagebased model proposing that children acquire blocks of language rather than single words and have an innate facility for intentionreading and pattern-finding

Critical period

Eric Lenneberg proposed the idea that children up until approximately age five could develop their language naturally, responding to their genetic predisposition to do so. After this period has passed, language development, it was thought, becomes a great deal harder

Descriptivism attitude

an attitude to language that describes what is there, explaining it, without judgement

Dialect levelling

the merging of different dialects to form one uniform <u>dialect</u>, reducing the range of dialects

Difference approach

this approach to language suggests that men and women use language differently. Deborah Tannen is an exponent of this approach (e.g. she claims that men use language to build status, whereas women use language to build networks of connections)

Dominance approach

this suggests that in mixed gender conversations men dominate the discourse. Men interrupt, and speak more than women, due to the cultural construction of gender within society

Face

the way a speaker deals with potential threat to self-esteem. The term was introduced by the sociologist Goffman and then developed further by Brown and Levinson

Functional basis of language

a theory of language acquisition based on the idea that children are motivated to develop language because it serves certain purposes or functions for them. Michael Halliday became a major proponent of this theory

Grice's conversational maxims

Grice came up with the term 'cooperative principle' and developed a number of conversation maxims which he suggested shape the way we converse.

Ideational metafunction

Halliday identified a concept he termed the ideational metafunction, which relates to the ways in which we represent the world around us using language in our spoken and written discourse

Nativism

Nativists believe that babies are born with an inbuilt capacity to learn language. Noam Chomsky, a prominent nativist, thought that the capacity to develop speech was 'programmed' into the human brain

Prescriptivism attitude

an attitude to language that suggests that some forms of language are more valuable than others – this approach prescribes what is correct and what is not

Social interaction

Jerome Bruner was a major figure in developing this theory, which emphasized the environment within which the child lives, especially the social environment (e.g. the family), in supporting linguistic development

Standard English

the form of English often considered by prescriptivists to be the 'correct' form

Synthetic personalization

a concept attributed to Norman Fairclough who used it to describe the way that texts relate to an imagined reader. Often this imagined reader has particular values and attitudes; the assumption that these are shared can be a way of imposing a particular ideology, or set of beliefs

Technological determination

this theory asserts that technology determines the ways in which language is used and developed. Technological advances shape the ways in which human beings communicate rather than human beings manipulating technology to suit their communicative needs

Universal Grammar

a theory, attributed to <u>Chomsky</u>, which proposes that there are properties and rules shared by all human languages that are 'hardwired' into the brain, i.e. they exist innately rather than being taught



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