

Key Linguistic Terms and Concepts

Alexandre Kimenyi

The following linguistic terms and concepts should be known by all students of linguistics. They should be not only familiar with them, but be also able to define them, explain them and give examples. They are not alphabetically ordered.

Linguistics: general linguistics, descriptive linguistics, theoretical linguistics, formal linguistics, functional linguistics, historical linguistics, synchronic linguistics, diachronic linguistics, comparative linguistics, psycholinguistics, sociolinguistics, anthropological linguistics, computational linguistics, neurolinguistics, cognitive linguistics, mathematical linguistics.

Comparative and historical linguistics: sound change, sound correspondance, the English great vowel shift, cognates, faux amis (false friends), sound reconstruction, isolating language.

Grammar: generative-transformational grammar, case grammar, functional grammar, relational grammar, Structural grammar, optimality theory, minimalism, universal grammar, theta theory,

Linguistic Representation: deep structure, underlying representation, mental representation, phonemic representation, input structure, surface structure, phonetic representation, output structure.

Linguistic rules: phrase-structure rules (angled brackets, tree diagrams, rewrite rules), movements, permutations, deletions, additions, neutralizations, fusions, promotions, demotions, raisings, lowerings, dislocations, Meeussen rule.

Linguistic laws: Dalh's law, Ganda law, Kwanyama law, Grimm's law.

Phonetics: articulatory phonetics, acoustic phonetics, secondary articulation, consonants, vowels, liquids, glides, nasal sounds, oral sounds, voiced consonants, voiceless consonants, voiceless vowels, stops, continuants, fricatives, affricates, labial, bilabial, dental, alveolar, alveodental, palatal, alveopalatal, uvular, glottal, ingressive, egressive, complex consonants, velar, velarized consonants, palatalized consonants, labio-velarized consonants, clicks, aspirated consonants, prenasalized consonants, vowels, front vowels, back vowels, high vowels, low vowels, mid-vowels, semi-vowels, round vowels, syllabic consonant, vocoid.

Phonology: segmental phonology, suprasegmental phonology, autosegmental phonology, metrical phonology, segment, autosegment, suprasegment, phoneme, phone, allophone, vowel coalescence, vowel harmony, advanced tongue root, vowel addition, vowel deletion, default vowel, vowel shortening, vowel lengthening, epenthesis, umlaut, homorganic nasal, nasalization, consonant deletion, consonant addition, consonant lenition, consonant strengthening, fricative harmony, free variation, assimilations, dissimilations, insertions, minimal pairs, rhotacirisation, the great vowel shift, sandhi rules, syllable, open syllable, closed syllable, truncation, accent, stress, pitch, intonation, meter.

Tones: tonology, tone, toneme, lexical tone, grammatical tone, high tone, low tone, falling tone, rising tone, contour tone, toneless, tone addition, tone deletion, tone movement, tone anticipation, tone spread, Meeussen rule, stray tone, tone domain, metrical domain, extrametrical domain, extraprosodic domain,

extratonal domain, defooting, tone haplogy, beat addition, beat movement, beat deletion, leftward tone displacement, rightward tone displacement.

Morphology: morpheme, free morpheme, bound morpheme, allomorph, zero morpheme, derivational morphemes, inflectional morphemes, zero derivation, augment, affix, preprefix, prefix, infix, suffix, post-suffix, circumfix, suprafix, portmanteau morpheme, root, stem, fossilized form, closed-class words, open-class words, morphophonology, morphosyntax, class marker, subject marker, object marker, tense marker, aspect, mood, tense, clitics, proclitics, enclitics, paradigm, paradigmatic derivation, syntagmatic derivation, suppression, irregular verbs, defective verbs, backformation, acronymism.

Syntax: grammatical relations, verb phrase, noun phrase, kernel sentence, main clause, subordinate clause, relative clause, antecedent, subjectivization, objectivization, cliticization, nominalization, pronominalization, adjectivization, head noun, modifier, determiner, reflexive pronouns, demonstrative independent pronouns, null pronouns, double-object construction, inherent direct objects, structural objects, oblique objects, adjunct objects, juxtaposition., subject agreement, object agreement, anaphora, cataphora, cleft sentences, pseudocleft sentences, yes-no questions, wh-questions, tag questions, questioning in-situ, echo questions, serial-verb construction, constituency analysis, existential clause, focus construction, transitivity, intransitivity, extraposition, dislocation (left/right), external relation, alienable possession, inalienable possession, valency, passivization, antipassive voice, ergativity, agent, causative, causee, causativization, accusative, nominative, genitive, recipient, patient, theme, rheme, reciprocal, comitative. Associative, benefactive, recipient, stative verb, active verb.

Semantics: semantic roles, referent, presupposition, entailment, factive verbs, cognitive verbs, ambiguity, synonymy, polysemy, homonymy, metaphor, metonymy, trope, synecdoche, redundancy, arbitrariness of the linguistic sign, iconicity of the linguistic sign, opacity, euphemism, oxymoron, pleonasm, hyperbole, new information, old information., semantic shift.

Language: lingua franca, national language, official language, vernacular, dialect, creole, pidgin, slang, argot, language family, protolanguage, cognate, faux amis (false cognates), sound correspondance.

Linguistic categories: noun classes, semantic fields, linguistic natural categories, linguistic grammatical categories

Parts of speech: content words, functional words, closed categories, nouns, verbs, adjectives, prepositions, auxiliaries, serial verbs, conjunctions, subordinators, interjections, ideophones. demonstratives, possessives

Linguistic genetic classification:

Language isolates, pidgins, creoles

language family, Indo-European: Celtic, Romance (Italic), Slavic, Germanic, Baltic, Hellenic, Illyric, Tocharian, Thracian, Anatolian, Albanian, Indo-Iranian, Armenian); Sino-Tibetan languages: Chinese, Tibeto-Burman; Niger-Congo: Niger-Kongo : West Atlantic, Voltaic, Kwa, Benue-Congo (Cross River, Bantu), Mande; Afro-Asiatic : Semitic, Cushitic, Berber, Egyptian, Chadic; Nilo-Saharan : East, West, Central); Khoisan : Hatsa, Sindawe, Nama, San; Dravidian languages: North, Central, South-Central, Southern; Altaic languages : Mongolic, Tungusic, Turkic; Uralic: Finnic, Ugric, Samoyed, Yukhagir; Austro-Asiatic languages: Aslian, Mon-Khmer, Viet-Muong, Munda; Malayo-Polynesian (Austronesian):

Formosan, Western, Micronesian, Melanesian, Polynesian; Algonquian: Great Plains, Central, Eastern; Iroquois : Mohawk, Seneca, Cayuga, Onondaga, Cherokee, Tuscarora, Oneida; Sioux: Lakota, Dakota, Nakota; Athabascan (Na-Dene); Aleut-Inuit; Mayan; Papuan languages; Aboriginal languages of Australia

To find the definitions, explanations and exemplifications of these terms and concepts, please Google these words or use any any search engine for the online references or consult linguistic dictionaries.