

# 1. What is Linguistics?

- The scientific study of human language
- Aims of linguistic theory:
  - What is knowledge of language? (**Competence**)
  - How is knowledge of language acquired? (**Acquisition**)
  - How is knowledge of language put to use? (**Performance/language processing**)

- A **grammar** includes everything one knows about the structure of one's language:
  - **Phonetics and Phonology** (the sounds and the sound system or patterns)
  - **Lexicon** (the words or vocabulary in the mental dictionary)
  - **Morphology** (the structure of words)
  - **Syntax** (the structure of phrases and sentences and the constraints on well-formedness of sentences)
  - **Semantics** (the meaning of words and sentences)

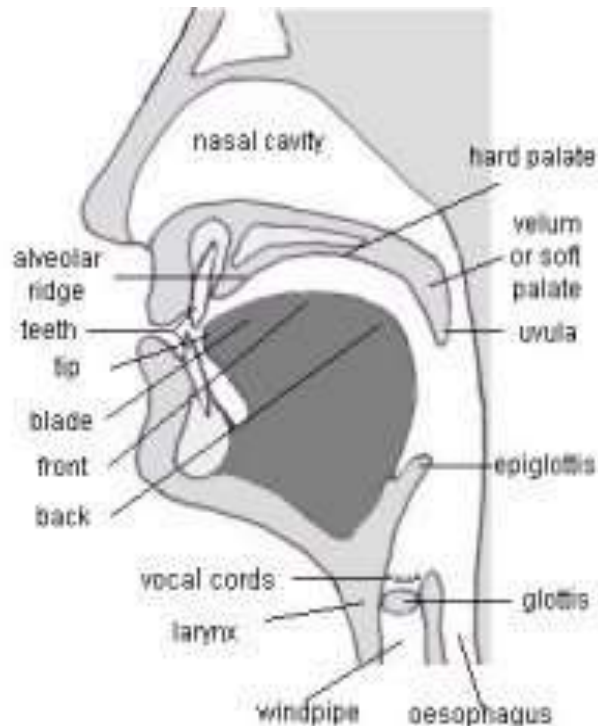
## 2. Main branches of linguistics

- Phonetics
- Phonology
- Morphology
- Syntax
- Semantics
- Pragmatics



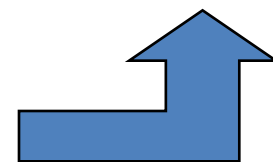
# Phonetics

- **Phonetics** studies speech sounds, including the production of speech, that is how speech sounds are actually made, transmitted and received, the description and classification of speech sounds, words and connected speech, etc.



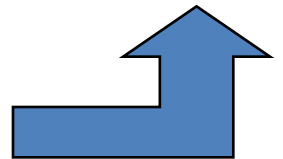
- **We can approach it on various levels.**
  - **At one level, speech is a matter of anatomy and physiology. We can study organs such as tongue and larynx and their functions in the production of speech.**
  - **At another level, we can focus on the speech sounds produced by these organs by identifying and classifying the individual sounds. This is the domain of **articulatory phonetics**.**

- We can also investigate the properties of the sound waves — **acoustic phonetics**.
- As speech is intended to be heard or perceived, it is therefore possible to focus on the way in which a listener analyses or processes a sound wave — **auditory phonetics**.



# Phonology

- **Phonology** studies the rules governing the structure, distribution, and sequencing of speech sounds and the shape of syllables. It deals with the sound system of a language by treating phoneme as the point of departure.
  - A **phoneme** is the smallest linguistic unit of sound that can signal a difference in meaning.

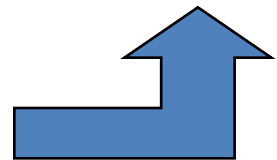


# Morphology

- **Morphology** is concerned with the internal organization of words. It studies the minimal units of meaning — morphemes and word-formation processes.
  - Although many people think of words as the basic meaningful elements of a language, many words can be broken down into still smaller units, called **morphemes**.



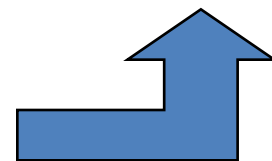
- **Morphemes serve different purposes. Some derive new words by changing the meaning or the part of speech, others only refine and give extra grammatical information about the already existing meaning of a word.**
  - **As morphemes are pairings of sounds with meanings, there are many complexities involved, forming a new field by the name **morphophonology**.**



# Syntax

- **Syntax** is about principles of forming and understanding correct sentences.
  - The form or structure of a sentence is governed by the rules of syntax, which specify word order, sentence organization, and the relationships between words, word classes and other sentence elements.

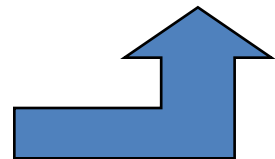
- **We know that words are organized into structures more than just word order.**
  - **The children watched [the firework from the hill ].**
  - **The children watched [the firework ] [from the hill ].**
  - **The chicken is too hot to eat.**



# Semantics

- **Semantics** examines how meaning is encoded in a language.
  - It is not only concerned with meanings of words as lexical items, but also with levels of language below the word and above it, e.g. meaning of morphemes and sentences.

- The following are what the key concepts look like:
  - semantic components
  - denotation of words
  - sense relations between words such as **antonymy** and **synonymy**
  - sense relations between sentences such as **entailment** and **presupposition** and others.



# Pragmatics

- **Pragmatics** is the study of meaning in context. It deals with particular utterances in particular situations and is especially concerned with the various ways in which the many social contexts of language performance can influence interpretation.
  - In other words, pragmatics is concerned with the way language is used to communicate rather than with the way language is internally structured.

# Psycholinguistics

- **Psycholinguistics** investigates the interrelation of language and mind, for example, in processing and producing utterances and in language acquisition.
  - It also studies language development in the child, such as the theories of language acquisition, biological foundations of language, and a profound aspect—the relationship between language and cognition.

# Sociolinguistics

- **Sociolinguistics** is the study of the characteristics of language varieties, the characteristics of their functions, and the characteristics of their speakers as these three constantly interact and change within a speech community.
  - An umbrella term which covers a variety of different interests in language and society, including the social functions of language and the social characteristics of its users.



# Anthropological linguistics

- **Anthropology** and linguistics became closely associated in the early days of anthropological fieldwork when anthropologists enlisted the help of linguists to study unwritten languages.
  - In contrast with other linguists, then, anthropological linguists are interested primarily in the history and structure of formerly unwritten languages.

- **Because an unwritten language must be heard in order to be studied, it does not leave any traces once its speakers died off.**
  - **Anthropological linguists must begin in the present, with comparisons of contemporary languages.**
  - **Then they may draw inferences about the kinds of change in language that may have occurred in the past and that may account for similarities and differences observed in the present.**

# Computational linguistics

- **Computational linguistics** centers around the use of computers to process or produce human language (also known as “**natural language**”, to distinguish it from computer languages).
  - To this field, a linguist contributes an understanding of the special properties of language data, and provides theories and descriptions of language structure and use.

- **Some current application areas include translating from one language to another (**Machine Translation**), storing and finding relevant documents in large collections of text (**Corpus Linguistics** and **Information Retrieval**), and carrying out various forms of **computer mediated communication**.**