

## THE HISTORY OF ENGLISH LINGUISTICS

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**Abstract:** *In this article you will be give main information about the history of English linguistics. Firstly, you can learn about English history and general information about English linguistics. Finally, you can get data about the role of English in today's world.*

**Key words:** *English language, linguistics, general English, strategy of learning English linguistics.*

English belongs to the Indo-European family of languages and is therefore related to most other languages spoken in Europe and western Asia from Iceland to India. The parent tongue, called Proto-Indo-European, was spoken about 5,000 years ago by nomads believed to have roamed the southeast European plains. Germanic, one of the language groups descended from this ancestral speech, is usually divided by scholars into three regional groups: East (Burgundian, Vandal, and Gothic, all extinct), North (Icelandic, Faroese, Norwegian, Swedish, and Danish and West ,German, Dutch [and Flemish], Frisian, and English). Though closely related to English, German remains far more conservative than English in its retention of a fairly elaborate system of inflections. Frisian, spoken by the inhabitants of the Dutch province of Friesland and the islands off the west coast of Schleswig, is the language most nearly related to Modern English. Icelandic, which has changed little over the last thousand years, is the living language most nearly resembling Old English in grammatical structure.

British Received Pronunciation (RP), traditionally defined as the standard speech used in London and southeastern England, is one of many forms (or accents) of standard speech throughout the English-speaking world. Other pronunciations, although not standard, are often heard in the public domain. A very small percentage of the population of England is estimated to use “pure” RP (although the actual percentage is as unknown as what constitutes “pure” RP). It is considered the prestige accent in such institutions as the civil service and the BBC and, as such, has fraught associations with wealth and privilege.

The chief differences between RP, as defined above, and a variety of American English, such as Inland Northern (the speech form of western New England and its derivatives, often popularly referred to as General American), are in the pronunciation of certain individual vowels and diphthongs. Inland Northern American vowels sometimes have semiconsonantal final glides (i.e., sounds resembling initial w, for example, or initial y). Aside from the final glides, that American accent shows four divergences from British English: (1) the words *cod*, *box*, *dock*, *hot*, and *not* are pronounced with a short (or half-long) low front sound as in British *bird* shortened (the terms *front*, *back*, *low*, and *high* refer to the position of the tongue); (2) words such as *bud*, *but*, *cut*, and *rung* are pronounced with a central vowel as in the unstressed final syllable of *sofa*; (3) before the fricative sounds *s*, *f*, and *θ* (the last of these is the *th* sound in *thin*) the long low back vowel *a*, as in British *bath*, is pronounced as a short front vowel *a*, as in British *bad*; (4) high back vowels following the alveolar sounds *t* and *d* and the nasal sound *n* in words such as *tulips*, *dew*, and *news* are pronounced without a glide as in British English; indeed, the words sound like

the British two lips, do, and nooze in snooze. (In several American accents, however, these glides do occur.)

The 24 consonant sounds comprise six stops (plosives): p, b, t, d, k, g; the fricatives f, v, θ (as in thin), ð [eth] (as in then), s, z, ʃ [esh] (as in ship), ʒ (as in pleasure), and h; two affricatives: tʃ (as in church) and dʒ (as the j in jam); the nasals m, n, ŋ (the sound that occurs at the end of words such as young); the lateral l; the postalveolar or retroflex r; and the semivowels j (often spelled y) and w. These remain fairly stable, but Inland Northern American differs from RP in two respects: (1) r following vowels is preserved in words such as door, flower, and harmony, whereas it is lost in RP; (2) t between vowels is voiced, so that metal and matter sound very much like British medal and madder, although the pronunciation of this t is softer and less aspirated, or breathy, than the d of British English.

Like Russian, English is a strongly stressed language. Four degrees of accentuation may be differentiated: primary, secondary, tertiary, and weak, which may be indicated, respectively, by acute (´), circumflex (^), and grave (`) accent marks and by the breve (˘). Thus, “Têll mè thě trúth” (the whole truth, and nothing but the truth) may be contrasted with “Têll mé thě trûth” (whatever you may tell other people); “bláck bîrd” (any bird black in colour) may be contrasted with “bláckbird” (that particular bird *Turdus merula*). The verbs permít and recórd (henceforth only primary stresses are marked) may be contrasted with their corresponding nouns pérmit and récord. A feeling for antepenultimate (third syllable from the end) primary stress, revealed in such five-syllable words as equanímy, longitúdinal, notoríety, opportúny, parsimónious, pertinácity, and vegetárian, causes stress to shift when extra syllables are added, as in histórical, a derivative of history and theatricáity, a derivative of théátrical. Vowel qualities are also changed here and in such word groups as périod, períódical, periodícity; phótograph, photógraphy, fotográphable. French stress may be sustained in many borrowed words; e.g., bizárre, critíque, duréss, hotél, prestíge, and techníque.

Linguistics is the study of language. People who study language are called linguists.

There are five main parts of linguistics: the study of sounds (phonology), the study of parts of words, like "un-" and "-ing" (morphology), the study of word order and how sentences are made (syntax), the study of the meaning of words (semantics), and the study of the unspoken meaning of speech that is separate from the literal meaning of what is said (for example, saying "I'm cold" to get someone to turn off the fan (pragmatics).

There are many ways to use linguistics every day. Some linguists are theoretical linguists and study the theory and ideas behind language, such as historical linguistics (the study of the history of language, and how it has changed), or the study of how different groups of people may use language differently (sociolinguistics). Some linguists are applied linguists and use linguistics to do things. For example, forensic linguistics is used in crime investigations, and computational linguistics is used to help make computers understand languages, as in speech recognition.

Specialties.

There are many different specialties (subfields or sub-disciplines) within linguistics.

Theoretical linguistics looks at how languages are structured and how they work. This includes phonology, morphology, syntax, semantics, and pragmatics.

Evolutionary linguistics explores the origins of language as a whole. Historical linguistics studies how languages change over time, and how languages were used in the past. This includes

etymology, the study of the history of words. Comparative linguistics compares different languages to find similarities between them. That makes it possible to find things shared by all the languages of the world, and to learn the languages that are related in a language family.

Cognitive linguistics looks at how language and thoughts are organised in the human brain. This includes psycholinguistics, which explores the representation and function of language in the mind; and neurolinguistics, which looks at language processing in the brain.

Language acquisition looks at how humans recognize and understand language. First language acquisition explores how children acquire (learn) their first language; second language acquisition explores how adults learn languages.

Some sub-disciplines of linguistics focus on understanding how languages are used in society or in the world. Sociolinguistics studies how language is used in society; for example, how factors such as gender and social class can impact how language is used. Discourse analysis is the study of entire conversations or texts.

Although linguistics is the scientific study of language, many other intellectual disciplines are relevant to language and overlap with it. For example, semiotics is the general study of signs and symbols both within language and outside it. Literary theorists study the use of language in literature. Linguistics additionally draws on and informs work from fields such as acoustics, anthropology, biology, computer science, human anatomy, informatics, neuroscience, philosophy, psychology, sociology, and speech-language pathology.

The study of language began in India with Pāṇini, the 5th century BC grammarian who wrote about the 3,959 rules of Sanskrit grammar, which described the different kinds of vowels and consonants of Sanskrit as well as its verb and noun classes. In the Middle East, Sibawayh wrote a book about Arabic in 760 AD, *Al-kitab fi al-nahw* (between sounds and phonemes).

Linguistics started in the West as early as it did in the East, but Western linguistics at that time was more like philosophy and less the study of language. Plato was the first, *The Book on Grammar*) and was the first known author to talk about the difference western philosopher to write about semantics in his *Cratylus* in which he argues that words represent concepts that are eternal and exist in the world of ideas. The word etymology is first used to talk about the history behind a word's meaning.

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