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ablaut Change in vowel sound that indicates tense in English “strong verbs,” as in *sing, sang, sung*.

abstract Short introductory summary of what happened or an overview statement that captures the interest of a NARRATIVE. See also CODA, COMPLICATING ACTION, EVALUATION, ORIENTATION, and RESOLUTION.

accent Systematic phonological variation among DIALECTS.

accentual-syllabic meter Patterned distribution of stress and SYLLABLES into poetic feet; according to traditional poetics, most English poetry employs accentual-syllabic meter. See also FOOT, METER, PURE ACCENTUAL METER, PURE SYLLABIC METER, RHYTHM, and SCANSION.

acoustic phonetics Study of sound in language focused on how sound is transmitted. See also ARTICULATORY PHONETICS and AUDITORY PHONETICS.

acrolect CREOLE that closely resembles its LEXIFIER LANGUAGE, that is, exhibits relatively few creole features. See also BASILECT and MESOLECT.

acronym Result of a word-formative process in which the initial sounds of a phrase or compound name make a word, as in *scuba* from *s(elf)-c(ontained) u(nderwater) b(reathing) a(pparatus)*; the process by which such words are made is **acronymy**.

adjacency pairs In DISCOURSE, UTTERANCES (like questions, requests, or invitations) that require a response together with the response: “I’m going to the movies. Do you want to go with?” “Yeah.” The invitation and its response are adjacent (that is, immediately next to each other) in the conversation.

adjectival Any CONSTITUENT that modifies a NOUN or noun phrase. See also ADVERBIAL and NOMINAL.

adjective Word that modifies (limits, qualifies, or specifies) a NOUN; also, a LEXICAL CATEGORY that includes such words. See also ADJECTIVAL.

adverb Word that modifies (limits, qualifies, or specifies) either a VERB or an ADJECTIVE or another ADVERB; also, a LEXICAL CATEGORY including such words. A CLAUSE with an adverb or adverbial phrase at its head is called an **adverbial clause**. See also ADVERBIAL, DISCOURSE ADVERB, MANNER ADVERB, SENTENCE ADVERB, and TEMPORAL ADVERB.

adverbial Any CONSTITUENT that functions as any kind of ADVERB, including DISCOURSE or SENTENCE ADVERBS. See also ADJECTIVAL and NOMINAL.

affix BOUND MORPHEME that precedes a base (a PREFIX, such as *pre-*, *suf-*, or *in-*), follows a base (a SUFFIX, such as *-s* to form plurals or *-y* to form adjectives from nouns, verbs, or other adjectives), or is inserted into a base or MATRIX (an INFIX, such as *-freaking-* in *unfreakingbelievable*). The process of forming a word with an affix is called **affixing** or **affixation**.

affricate Speech sound composed of a STOP followed by a FRICATIVE, for instance, the initial sound in *chatter*. See also NASAL and OBSTRUENT.

agglutinative language A language in which words are formed from various linguistic elements, often representing different LEXICAL CATEGORIES, so that individual words approximate what, in English, would be considered a sentence. See also ANALYTIC LANGUAGE and SYNTHETIC LANGUAGE.

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alliteration Repetition of sounds or groups of sounds (usually, but not always, word-initial sounds) in successive words, as in the phrases “coordinating conjunction” and “past participle.” See also ASSONANCE and CONSONANCE.

allomorph Any variant of a MORPHEME; for instance, the morpheme [PLURAL] is realized in English as several allomorphs: *-s* (as in *dogs*), *-es* (as in *horses*), *-en* (as in *oxen*), and zero-plural, when the plural form is the same as the singular (as in *deer*).

allophone Any variant of a PHONEME; for instance, *perhaps* realizes two allophones of the phoneme /p/, one aspirated (the initial one), the other not.

alphabetism Word formed from the first letters of words in a phrase or compound name, as in *FBI* for *F*(ederal) *B*(ureau of) *I*(nvestigation) or *ACLU* for *A*(merican) *C*(ivil) *L*(iberties) *U*(nion); also, the word-formative process that results in such a word. Also called INITIALISM.

alternation Switching between grammatical structures of two languages. See also CODE-SWITCHING, CONGRUENT LEXICALIZATION, and INSERTION.

alveolar ridge Tissue above the upper teeth where the tongue rests to produce certain sounds, such as [z]. A sound thus produced is called an **alveolar**.

amelioration Semantic process by which a word means something “better” than it had at an earlier stage of its history; for instance, *knight* once simply meant ‘boy, servant’, but now indicates someone of a relatively high social rank. See also DYSPEMISM, EUPHEMISM, PEJORATION, and REAPPROPRIATION.

analogical mapping Projection of meaning from one semantic domain into another, as when the term *virus* extends from human disease to computer malfunction; analogical mapping operates in many SEMANTIC SHIFTS.

analogy Linguistic process by which the less usual is drawn to resemble the usual; for instance, in the sixteenth century, *pea* was invented as a singular form to replace historical singular *peas*, because, generally, English plurals are formed with the suffix *-s*.

analytic language A language in which word order, rather than inflection, mostly indicates grammatical functions in a sentence, and in which auxiliary words (PREPOSITIONS, AUXILIARY VERBS, etc.) partially or wholly replace inflections. See also AGGLUTINATIVE LANGUAGE and SYNTHETIC LANGUAGE.

anaphora Repetition of a word or phrase within a sentence or, especially, among lines of a poem.

anaphoric reference Within NARRATIVE, reference to something previously indicated; in “Let me tell you about fish. They lead boring lives,” *They* refers to the *fish* mentioned in the previous sentence. See also CATAPHORIC REFERENCE, COMPARATIVE REFERENCE, DEMONSTRATIVE REFERENCE, ENDOPHORIC REFERENCE, EXOPHORIC REFERENCE, and PERSONAL REFERENCE.

anticipation Verbal slip in which a later sound accidentally also occurs earlier than it should in a word or phrase, as in *wish a brush for with a brush*. See also MALAPROPISM, PRESERVATION, and SPOONERISM.

antonyms Pair of words each member of which means the opposite of the other, such as *good* and *evil*. The semantic relationship of such words is **antonymy**. See also COMPLEMENTARY ANTONYMS, CONVERSENESS, GRADABLE ANTONYMS, and NONGRADABLE ANTONYMS.

aphasia Partial or total inability either to convey ideas in language or to understand language, as a result of damage to the brain, whether from injury or disease.

applied linguistics A branch of linguistics that applies linguistic theory to real-world problems, in areas such as language policy, education, and speech pathology.

approximant Sound made by restricting but not blocking the vocal tract, such as /r/ or /j/. See also BUNCHED /r/, GLIDE, LATERAL LIQUID, LIQUID, and RETROFLEX LIQUID.

articulator Organ a speaker employs to produce and distinguish certain speech sounds; those a speaker moves, like tongue and lips, are called **active articulators**, whereas those a speaker cannot move, like the hard and soft PALATES, are called **passive articulators**.

articulatory phonetics Study of sound in language focused on how speakers produce it. See also ACOUSTIC PHONETICS and AUDITORY PHONETICS.

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aspect Category of VERB meaning that indicates whether, for instance, an action is in progress or completed, momentary or habitual, etc. See also MOOD and TENSE.

assertive ILOCUTIONARY ACT that represents a state of affairs, characterized, for instance, by stating, claiming, insisting, suggesting, etc. Assertives are also called REPRESENTATIVES. See also COMMISSIVE, DECLARATION, DIRECTIVE, EXPRESSIVE, and VERDICTIVE.

assimilation Phonological process in which a sound changes to resemble a nearby sound, as when *in-* 'not' becomes *im-* in *impossible*.

assonance ALLITERATION in which the repeated sound is a VOWEL. See also CONSONANCE.

attributive ADJECTIVE or NOUN that describes a quality or characteristic of a noun and modifies that noun directly, as opposed to a PREDICATIVE. *Attributive* is also used as an adjective, as in the phrase *attributive noun*.

auditory phonetics Study of sound in language focused on how people perceive it. See also ACOUSTIC PHONETICS and ARTICULATORY PHONETICS.

auxiliary verb VERB used in combination with another verb to indicate TENSE, MOOD, or ASPECT of that other verb; in English, *will*, *may*, etc., are auxiliary verbs. See also DEONTIC MODAL AUXILIARY, EPISTEMIC MODAL AUXILIARY, and MODAL AUXILIARY.

back-channeling In conversation, any indication that a participant is paying attention; backchanneling may be verbal ("yeah" or "uh-huh" or "mmm") or nonverbal (as in head nodding). See also MINIMAL RESPONSE.

backformation Word derived by loss of a supposed (but unhistorical) prefix or suffix from another word; for instance, the verb *backform* is a backformation of *backformation*, as are the verbs *burgle* from *burglar* and *edit* from *editor*. *Backformation* is the name of the wordformative process, as well as the derived form. See also INNOVATIVE CLIPPING.

backness DISTINCTIVE FEATURE of VOWELS realized when the tongue is placed toward the back of the mouth. See also BACK VOWEL, FRONTNESS, HEIGHT, LAXNESS, and TENSENESS.

back vowel VOWEL sound produced when the tongue is placed toward the back of the mouth, such as the vowels in *put* and *bought*. See also CENTRAL VOWEL and FRONT VOWEL.

bare infinitive NONFINITE form of a VERB that serves as the base for inflectional development or expresses the core meaning of a verb, without concern for NUMBER or PERSON. See also INFINITIVE.

basilect CREOLE strongly marked against its LEXIFIER LANGUAGE, that is, one with extensive creole features. See also ACROLECT and MESOLECT.

blend Word that combines two or more words, at least one of which is CLIPPED; for instance, *smog* is a blend of *sm(oke)* and *(f)og*. The relevant word-formative process is **blending**.

borrowing 1: Word adopted, adapted, or literally translated from another language. 2: The word-formative process that produces such a word. See also CALQUE and LOAN TRANSLATION. 3: Process in which dialectal vocabulary is enriched by contact languages. See also COINING, LANGUAGE CONTACT, NATURALLY OCCURRING INTERNAL LANGUAGE CHANGE, RETENTION, SOCIAL FACTOR, and STRUCTURAL INFLUENCE.

bound morpheme MORPHEME used only when attached to a morpheme that can be used independently; AFFIXES are bound morphemes. See also FREE MORPHEME.

branch In a PHRASE, CLAUSE, or SENTENCE structure TREE, the line drawn from one CONSTITUENT level to another, in order to indicate syntactic hierarchy. See also NODE.

Broca's aphasia APHASIA caused by damage to BROCA'S AREA, because of which a speaker finds it difficult, if not impossible, to form comprehensible sentences. See also WERNICKE'S APHASIA.

Broca's area Area in the CORTEX at the LEFT HEMISPHERE of the brain partly responsible for language production. See also WERNICKE'S AREA.

bunched /r/ ALLOPHONE of /r/ produced when the tongue is tense and placed toward the roof of the mouth. See also APPROXIMANT, GLIDE, LATERAL LIQUID, LIQUID, and RETROFLEX LIQUID.

caesura Pause inserted into the metrical structure of a line of poetry.

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calque Word translated literally when borrowed from one language into another, such as *cover* ‘table setting’ from French *couver*. See also LOAN TRANSLATION.

case Quality of a NOUN, PRONOUN, ADJECTIVE, PARTICIPLE, or DETERMINER that indicates syntactic FUNCTION; for instance, a noun may take the SUBJECT, DIRECT OBJECT, INDIRECT OBJECT, or possessive case, depending on how it is used in a sentence (if you have studied a classical language, you may be familiar with older terms for these cases, such as *nominative*, *accusative*, *dative*, and *genitive*).

cataphoric reference Within NARRATIVE, reference to something subsequently indicated; in “It’s a boring life. Fish need useful employment or, at least, hobbies to occupy their spare time,” *It* refers to a fish’s life of spare time. See also ANAPHORIC REFERENCE, COMPARATIVE REFERENCE, DEMONSTRATIVE REFERENCE, ENDOPHORIC REFERENCE, EXOPHORIC REFERENCE, and PERSONAL REFERENCE.

CDA ALPHABETISM for CRITICAL DISCOURSE ANALYSIS.

central vowel Most common VOWEL in English, formed in the center of the mouth, as in *but* and the first syllable of *about*; IPA represents the central vowel differently when it appears in stressed syllables and unstressed syllables—in stressed syllables it is indicated by a \wedge (wedge) and in unstressed syllables by a \circ (schwa). See also BACK VOWEL and FRONT VOWEL.

change from above Development of language above the level of consciousness, that is, as a result of deliberate choices on the parts of speakers. See also CHANGE FROM BELOW.

change from below Development of language below the level of consciousness, that is, when speakers are unaware of their own speech and its place in language change. See also CHANGE FROM ABOVE.

clause Syntactic structure composed of a subject and a predicate. See also COMPLEX SENTENCE, COMPOUND SENTENCE, MAIN CLAUSE, SENTENCE, and SUBORDINATE CLAUSE.

clipping Word shortened from a larger one, generally at its primary morphemic boundary, such as *taxi* from *taxis*. Also the word-formative process that produces such a word. See also BACKFORMATION, FORECLIPPING, HINDCLIPPING, and INNOVATIVE CLIPPING.

clitic Reduced form of a word (usually an AUXILIARY VERB in an unstressed position) that attaches to another, as in contractions like *I'll* and *what's*, so that the combination is pronounced as one word, even though both elements retain independent syntactic functions. See also ENCLITIC and PROCLITIC.

closed morphological class LEXICAL CATEGORY in which new items rarely develop, such as CONJUNCTION, DETERMINER, and PREPOSITION. See also OPEN MORPHOLOGICAL CLASS.

coda 1: In PHONOLOGY, the optional, final PHONEME in a SYLLABLE; in *cot*, /t/ is the coda. See also NUCLEUS and ONSET. 2: In a NARRATIVE, a final summary or comment that may provide a moral or lesson or connect the narrative to the context in which it’s told. See also ABSTRACT, COMPLICATING ACTION, EVALUATION, ORIENTATION, and RESOLUTION.

code-switching Movement from one language to another (for instance, from Spanish to English) or from one variety of a language to another (for instance, from African American English to Standard English) depending on the social or linguistic situation. Also called **code-mixing**. See also STYLE-SHIFTING.

cognate Word from one language that shares an ETYMON with a word from another language; for instance, English *fish* and French *pêche* are cognates, as they share an Indo-European etymon. It may be helpful to think of an etymon as a “parent” (or great-great-grandparent) word, a REFLEX as a “child” (or great-great-grandchild) word, and cognates as “cousin” words.

cohesion Property of NARRATIVE in which a set of linguistic features (for instance, REFERENCE, ELLIPSIS, and CONJUNCTION, among others) connects sentences into a larger linguistic structure. See also SUBSTITUTION and LEXICAL COHESION.

coining 1: Word creation. 2: Process in which speakers enrich dialectal vocabulary by creating new words. See also BORROWING, LANGUAGE CONTACT, NATURALLY OCCURRING INTERNAL LANGUAGE CHANGE, RETENTION, SOCIAL FACTOR, and STRUCTURAL INFLUENCE.

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collocation Arrangement of words into a PHRASE; combination of words that commonly co-occur as a phrase; such words are called **collocates**, and **collocate** is the related verb form.

combining form BOUND MORPHEME abstracted from a word (like *-holic* from *alcoholic* or *-scape* from *landscape*) or shifted from FREE MORPHEME to bound status (like *-free* from *free*) that functions as a SUFFIX.

comma splice Attempt to connect two INDEPENDENT CLAUSES with a comma but without a COORDINATING CONJUNCTION, generally perceived as a grammatical error.

commisive ILLOCUTIONARY ACT that requires the speaker (the performer of the act) to do something, such as promise, threaten, intend, or refrain. See also ASSERTIVE, DECLARATION, DIRECTIVE, EXPRESSIVE, REPRESENTATIVE, and VERDICTIVE.

communicative competence Ability, whether innate or learned, to communicate with language in conversation with other speakers.

community of practice Group of speakers who share speech practices because they engage in a common enterprise. See also SPEECH COMMUNITY.

comparative adjective Form of an adjective indicating that one item possesses a quality to a greater degree than another; for instance, grass can be *green*, but it can be even *greener* on the other side of the fence.

comparative reference Use of COMPARATIVE ADJECTIVES, SUPERLATIVE ADJECTIVES, or other words that compare (such as *same*, *likewise*, *other*, or *such*) in order to promote COHESION in a NARRATIVE.

complement PHRASE or CLAUSE that follows a VERB to complete a verb phrase.

complementary antonyms Words with absolutely opposite meanings, such as *alive* and *dead* (either you're alive or you're dead), and no relative or intermediary ones, such as *half-alive* or *undead* (except in a fictional context). Complementary antonyms are also called NONGRADABLE ANTONYMS; by contrast, *old* and *young* are GRADABLE ANTONYMS. See also ANTONYMS and CONVERSENESS.

complementary distribution Systematic organization of ALLOPHONES such that no two allophones of the same PHONEME occur in exactly the same environment.

complementizer SUBORDINATE CONJUNCTION that serves as the head of a SUBORDINATE CLAUSE that functions as a NOMINAL. See also COMPLEMENTIZER CLAUSE.

complementizer clause DEPENDENT CLAUSE that serves as a noun phrase, typically introduced by *that* or *wh-* words; in "We know what a complementizer clause is," *what a complementizer clause is* is the complementizer clause.

complex sentence SENTENCE with one or more SUBORDINATE CLAUSES embedded within or appended to the MAIN CLAUSE. See also COMPOUND SENTENCE.

complicating action Moment(s) in the ordering of a NARRATIVE when "something happens" or the situation changes. See also ABSTRACT, CODA, EVALUATION, ORIENTATION, and RESOLUTION.

compositionality In SEMANTICS, the view that sentence meaning depends not only on the meanings of a sentence's parts, but also on how those parts are put together.

compound Word in which two or more FREE MORPHEMES combine (without significant modification) into a single lexical item, for instance, when *blue* and *bird* combine to form *bluebird*. The word-formative process that produces such words is called **compounding**.

compound sentence SENTENCE with two or more INDEPENDENT CLAUSES. See also CLAUSE and COMPLEX SENTENCE.

congruent lexicalization Switching between lexical inventories of two language varieties that share grammatical structure. See also ALTERNATION, CODE-SWITCHING, and INSERTION.

conjugation Process of distinguishing forms of a VERB that indicate TENSE, MOOD, voice (active or passive), ASPECT, person (first, second, or third), and NUMBER. The verb form is **conjugate**. See also DECLENSION.

conjunction 1: Word used to connect words, PHRASES, CLAUSES, or SENTENCES. 2: In NARRATIVE, use of ADVERBIALS, CONJUNCTIONS, or PREPOSITIONS to promote COHESION among sentences.

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connotative meaning Lexical meaning that depends on linguistic and cognitive associations on the parts of speakers and hearers, rather than on relationship of a word to nonlinguistic things in the world. Also called **connotation**. See also DENOTATIVE MEANING.

consonance ALLITERATION in which the repeated sound is a CONSONANT. See also ASSONANCE.

consonant Speech sound produced by partial or total obstruction of air flow by one or more speech organs, like the tongue, lips, teeth, etc. See also DISTINCTIVE FEATURES and VOWEL.

constative speech act UTTERANCE that can be evaluated in terms of its TRUTH CONDITIONS. See also DIRECT SPEECH ACT, ILLOCUTIONARY ACT, INDIRECT SPEECH ACT, LOCUTIONARY ACT, PERLOCUTIONARY ACT, PRAGMATICS, SPEECH ACT, and SPEECH ACT THEORY.

constituency test Method for determining whether a linguistic unit is, in fact, a CONSTITUENT of some larger syntactic structure. See also COORDINATION TEST, MOVEMENT TEST, STAND ALONE TEST, and SUBSTITUTION TEST.

constituent Any component that functions as part of a larger linguistic structure; for instance, a DETERMINER or DET (for instance, *the*) and NOUN or N (for instance, *cat*) are constituents of the NOUN PHRASE or NP (*the cat*).

conversational floor Metaphorical area occupied by a person speaking in conversation, on which participants in the conversation take TURNS. See also EYE CONTACT, GESTURE, INTONATION, QUESTION, SILENCE, TURN, and TURN-TAKING VIOLATION.

conversational implicature Meaning that can be deduced from an utterance without its being explicitly stated; for instance, “Anne just pulled into the driveway” implies “Prepare to meet her at the door.”

convereness Distinguishing property of a class of NONGRADABLE ANTONYMS that have dependent meanings, such as *sister/brother*, *parent/child*, and, proverbially, *apples/oranges*, though the latter are not actually **converse**. See also ANTONYMS, COMPLEMENTARY ANTONYMS, and GRADABLE ANTONYMS.

Cooperative Principle In conversation, the principle that participants will cooperate with one another, especially that they will observe the conversational maxims defined by H. P. Grice, namely the MAXIMS OF MANNER, MAXIMS OF QUALITY, MAXIMS OF QUANTITY, and MAXIMS OF RELATION.

coordinating conjunction CONJUNCTION used to indicate that the words, phrases, or clauses it connects are functionally equal.

Coordination Test CONSTITUENCY TEST in which one balances a linguistic unit with a coordinate unit (a unit of the same hierarchical value) in order to determine whether the original unit is a CONSTITUENT. See also MOVEMENT TEST, STAND ALONE TEST, and SUBSTITUTION TEST.

corpus Any collection of texts from which linguistic information can be extracted, but especially those collections designed and developed specifically for that purpose. The plural form of *corpus* is **corpora**.

corpus callosum Tissue that connects the brain’s LEFT and RIGHT HEMISPHERES and allows them to communicate.

corpus linguistics Branch of linguistics concerned with the design, development, and use of CORPORA to study language.

correlative conjunction CONJUNCTION that expresses the equality or alternative value of elements within a syntactic structure; in “A correlative conjunction expresses either the equality of elements within a syntactic structure or their alternative value,” *either* and *or* are correlative conjunctions that express alternative value.

cortex Layer of gray matter that covers the hemispheres of the brain.

countable nouns NOUNS that can be counted; for instance, *noun* is a countable noun (“There are one hundred nouns on this page”) but *linguistics* is not (*“There are one hundred linguistics in this book”). See also NONCOUNTABLE NOUNS.

covert prestige Value that a nonstandard variety of a language carries within a speech community. See also OVERT PRESTIGE.

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creole Full-fledged language developed from a PIDGIN that has become the natural language of a SPEECH COMMUNITY once children are born into it and develop the pidgin in the expected course of language acquisition. See also ACROLECT, BASILECT, and MESOLECT.

Critical Age Hypothesis Position taken in theories of language acquisition that language learning is most fully realized before a speaker reaches puberty.

critical discourse analysis Systematic study of features within a DISCOURSE in relation to the sociopolitical context in which the discourse occurs; also called **CDA**. See also STYLISTICS.

DA ALPHABETISM for DISCOURSE ANALYSIS.

dangling participle PARTICIPLE used (some would say illogically or ungrammatically) without an antecedent subject, such as “Crumbling in his hand, he ate the cookie.”

declaration ILOCUTIONARY ACT that brings about the state of affairs to which it refers, such as blessing, firing, sentencing, or bidding. See also ASSERTIVE, COMMISSIVE, DIRECTIVE, EXPRESSIVE, REPRESENTATIVE, and VERDICTIVE.

declension INFLECTION of NOUNS, PRONOUNS, and ADJECTIVES according to categories like CASE, NUMBER, and GENDER. The verb form is **decline**. *Declension* is to *decline* as CONJUGATION is to CONJUGATE.

deep dyslexia DYSLEXIA in which language users substitute SYNONYMS or words phonologically similar to those intended. See PHONOLOGICAL DYSLEXIA and SURFACE DYSLEXIA.

defining vocabulary Lexicon from which definitions in a dictionary or glossary are written; most dictionaries ensure that all words used in their definitions are also defined in the same dictionaries, whereas glossaries like this one do not make a similar assurance that all words used in them are defined in them.

deixis Reference to personal, temporal, or locational features of the circumstance in which an utterance is made, by means of adverbs (*here, there, now, then*) and pronouns (*this and that*) whose meaning is relative to the circumstance. See also ENDOPHORIC REFERENCE, EXOPHORIC REFERENCE, PERSONAL DEIXIS, SPATIAL DEIXIS, and TEMPORAL DEIXIS.

deletion PHONOLOGICAL process in which speech sounds disappear from words, for instance, as when the vowel in the second syllable of *laboratory* is lost in pronunciation of the word.

demonstrative pronoun PRONOUN that specifies a person or thing, for instance, *this* in *this guy* or *this apple*. Such pronouns are also called **demonstratives**.

demonstrative reference Within NARRATIVE, reference, whether ENDOPHORIC (either ANAPHORIC or CATAPHORIC) or EXOPHORIC, by means of a DEMONSTRATIVE PRONOUN. See also COMPARATIVE REFERENCE and PERSONAL REFERENCE.

denotative meaning Lexical meaning that depends on the relationship of a word to nonlinguistic things, rather than on linguistic and cognitive associations on the parts of speakers and hearers. Also called **denotation**. See also CONNOTATIVE MEANING.

density In SOCIAL NETWORK THEORY, the measure of how many of the people that one person knows and interacts with also know and interact with one another. See also MULTIPLEXITY.

deontic modal auxiliary AUXILIARY VERB used to indicate the necessity or inevitability of an action or state, to imply an AGENT’s obligation to act as a PREDICATE specifies, or to indicate permission; for instance, “Necessity *must* be indicated by means of a deontic modal auxiliary,” “Deontic modal auxiliaries *must* be used to indicate inevitability,” “You *must* employ a deontic modal auxiliary if you want to convey obligation,” and “You *might* *should* employ a deontic modal auxiliary in this sentence, if you like” all illustrate deontic modal auxiliaries. Also see EPISTEMIC MODAL AUXILIARY for clarification.

dependent clause CLAUSE that cannot function as a SENTENCE, but that must be attached to or embedded in an INDEPENDENT CLAUSE; also called a SUBORDINATE CLAUSE.

derivational morpheme MORPHEME, whether a BOUND MORPHEME (COMBINING FORM, INFIX, PREFIX, or SUFFIX) or a FREE MORPHEME, that contributes to formation of a new word. See also INFLECTIONAL MORPHEME.

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description Telling of how things are, were, or will be, as distinct from NARRATIVE. See also EXPOSITION and PERSUASION.

descriptive rule Statement of what regularly actually occurs in a language or languages generally, as opposed to what supposedly *should* occur. See also PRESCRIPTIVE RULE.

descriptivist Person inclined to describe language as it is, has been, or will be, rather than to regulate language according to what he or she believes it *should* be; as an adjective, typical of such a person's attitude toward language. See also PRESCRIPTIVIST.

determiner Word that co-occurs with a NOUN to express certain qualities of that noun; for instance, *a* in *a noun* indicates that we mean 'any noun from among all nouns,' whereas *the* in *the noun* indicates that we mean 'noun previously selected from among all nouns for purposes of this sentence.'

diachronic Historical or concerned with history; language develops **diachronically**. See also SYNCHRONIC.

diacritics PHONETIC marks that indicate a value not expressed in the accompanying phonetic symbol or letter, as when [ë] represents a centralized vowel or the sound of the letter *e* is distinguished in *résumé* and *crèche*. See also INTERNATIONAL PHONETIC ALPHABET.

dialect Variety of a language, whether regional or social, systematically different from other varieties of the same language in structural (i.e., morphological, syntactic) or lexical features. See also ACCENT.

dialectology Study of variation in a particular language or language family. See also SOCIOLINGUISTICS and VARIATIONIST SOCIOLINGUISTICS.

diction Choice of words in speech or writing.

diphthong VOWEL that begins at one PLACE OF ARTICULATION and ends at another, as in *right*.

directive ILLCUTIONARY ACT designed to get the person addressed to do something, such as asking, ordering, and challenging. See also ASSERTIVE, COMMISSIVE, DECLARATION, EXPRESSIVE, REPRESENTATIVE, and VERDICTIVE.

direct object Recipient of a verb's action; in the sentence "I wrote a letter to my best friend," *letter* is the direct object. See also INDIRECT OBJECT.

direct speech Unmodified UTTERANCE, as opposed to indirect or reported speech; "Do you know what direct speech is?" is direct speech, whereas "Michael asked whether you know what direct speech is" is INDIRECT SPEECH.

direct speech act SPEECH ACT in which a LOCUTIONARY ACT corresponds exactly to an ILLCUTIONARY ACT. See also CONSTATIVE SPEECH ACT, INDIRECT SPEECH ACT, PERFORMATIVE SPEECH ACT, PERLOCUTIONARY ACT, PRAGMATICS, and SPEECH ACT THEORY.

discourse Continuous speech, whether spoken or written, larger than a SENTENCE.

discourse adverb ADVERB that modifies a sentence or longer segment of DISCOURSE, rather than a specific VERB; in "Hopefully, I'll always use adverbs grammatically," *hopefully* is a discourse adverb, and some consider it ungrammatical English usage; also called a SENTENCE ADVERB.

discourse analysis Systematic study of DISCOURSE; also called DA. See also CRITICAL DISCOURSE ANALYSIS and STYLISTICS.

discourse markers Lexical items, for instance, *I mean* and *well*, used to segment discourse into smaller, sequential units.

displacement Human cognitive ability, reflected in LINGUISTIC COMPETENCE, that allows projection forward and backward in time, as well as for abstract ideas.

distinctive features Characteristics of speech sounds that distinguish them from one another, namely, MANNER OF ARTICULATION, PLACE OF ARTICULATION, and VOICING in the case of CONSONANTS, and HEIGHT, BACKNESS or FRONTNESS, and TENSENESS or LAXNESS in the case of VOWELS.

ditransitive verb VERB that appears with two OBJECTS, as in "We give you lots of examples"; the essential property of such verbs is **ditransitivity**. See also INTRANSITIVE VERB, OBJECT-PREDICATIVE VERB, and TRANSITIVE VERB.

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dyslexia Learning disorder in which recognizing and comprehending written words is relatively difficult.

dysphemism Word or expression with negative CONNOTATIONS, used in place of a neutral term; for instance, in “Anne is easygoing, but Michael is lax,” *lax* is a dysphemism for ‘lacking rigor, strictness, or firmness.’ Also, the semantic process by which such words are formed. See also AMELIORATION, EUPHEMISM, PEJORATION, and REAPPROPRIATION.

eggcorn Phonetic reinterpretation of a word, such as *eggcorn* for *acorn*, so that the new form makes some kind of sense. See also FOLK ETYMOLOGY and REANALYSIS.

elaboration Re-presenting or clarifying material for purposes of narrative COHESION, by means of certain CONJUNCTIONS; for instance, *for instance* is a narrative conjunction that introduces elaboration. See also ENHANCEMENT and EXTENSION.

ellipsis 1: Omission of a word or phrase necessary to complete a syntactic structure in the abstract but unnecessary in speech; for instance, in “I’m going to the movies. Do you want to go with?” the OBJECT *me* is omitted from the second sentence. “Do you want to go with?” is **elliptical**—it is an **ellipsis** (omission of *me*) and also represents the syntactic process called **ellipsis**. 2: In NARRATIVE, use of ellipsis to promote COHESION by connecting the points at which information is omitted and supplied.

emoticon Symbol that communicates emotional response in Internet DISCOURSE, such as the ubiquitous smiley face :-).

enclitic CLITIC that attaches to the word preceding it. See also PROCLITIC.

endophoric reference Dependence of one NOUN or PRONOUN within a text to another preceding it (called ANAPHORIC REFERENCE) or following it (called CATAPHORIC REFERENCE) within the same text. See also EXOPHORIC REFERENCE.

enhancement Indication of cause, manner, space, or time by means of certain narrative CONJUNCTIONS, such as *meanwhile* and *because*, in order to promote COHESION. See also ELABORATION and EXTENSION.

enjambment Extension of a clause across two or more lines of poetry, as in the fifth stanza of Lewis Carroll’s “Jabberwocky”:

One, two! One two! And through and through
The vorpal blade went snicker-snack!
He left it dead, and with its head
He went galumphing back.

entailment Logical relationship between a statement and the conditions on which it is true. Whereas “Not everyone did well on this quiz” might mean that any number taking the quiz performed less than well, it only **entails** that one person did not perform well; whereas the same statement may imply that some students did poorly (it might function as a EUPHEMISM), it only says that at least one person did less than *well*, whatever *well* means. See also IMPLICATURE.

epiglottis Cartilage that covers the opening between the VOCAL CORDS and the LARYNX.

epistemic modal auxiliary AUXILIARY VERB used to indicate that the proposition underlying a statement is simply the case or is believed to be the case; for instance, in “Dinner must be ready now,” *must* functions as an epistemic modal auxiliary. See also DEONTIC MODAL AUXILIARY.

etymology 1: History of a word. 2: Study of word history.

etymon Historical word from which a more recent form was derived, whether in the same or a different language. For instance, Old English *ācsian* is the etymon for Modern English *ask*. It may be helpful to think of an etymon as a “parent” (or great-great-grandparent) word, a REFLEX as a “child” (or great-great-grandchild) word, and COGNATES as “cousin” words.

euphemism Word or expression with positive CONNOTATIONS used in place of a neutral term; for instance, in “Anne is easygoing, but Michael is lax,” *easygoing* is a euphemism for ‘lacking rigor, strictness, or firmness.’ Also, the semantic process by which such words are formed. See also AMELIORATION, DYSPEMISM, and PEJORATION.

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evaluation Comments throughout a NARRATIVE that address why it is interesting. See also ABSTRACT, CODA, COMPLICATING ACTION, ORIENTATION, and RESOLUTION.

exophoric reference Reference to something in a text's context or situation; for instance, "Did you see that?" refers to something in the speaker's environment, rather than to something identified previously in the text by means of a NOUN or PRONOUN. See also DEIXIS and ENDOPHORIC REFERENCE.

exposition Explanation of how things are, were, or will be, as distinct from NARRATIVE. See also DESCRIPTION and PERSUASION.

expressive ILLCUTIONARY ACT that expresses a speaker's mental state, such as apologizing, congratulating, or welcoming. See also ASSERTIVE, COMMISSIVE, DECLARATION, DIRECTIVE, REPRESENTATIVE, and VERDICTIVE.

extension Material added or qualified by means of narrative CONJUNCTIONS, such as *also*, *yet*, and *on the other hand*, in order to promote COHESION. See also ELABORATION and ENHANCEMENT.

eye contact Nonverbal means by which one indicates willingness to turn the CONVERSATIONAL FLOOR over to another participant. See also GESTURE, INTONATION, QUESTION, SILENCE, TURN, and TURN-TAKING VIOLATION.

eye rhymes Words that look as though they would RHYME exactly, but do not, such as *move* and *glove*.

face Conversational persona responsible for POLITENESS toward others and receiving others' politeness. See also FACE-THREATENING ACT, NEGATIVE FACE, NEGATIVE POLITENESS, POLITENESS, POSITIVE FACE, and POSITIVE POLITENESS.

face-threatening act Any utterance that challenges the level of POLITENESS in conversation. Also called FTA. See also FACE, NEGATIVE FACE, NEGATIVE POLITENESS, POSITIVE FACE, and POSITIVE POLITENESS.

felicity conditions Criteria on which SPEECH ACTS and ILLCUTIONARY ACTS are judged more or less successful, that is, to have achieved their purposes.

finite verb VERB form that indicates TENSE. See also NONFINITE VERB.

flap CONSONANT sound produced by single, rapid contact between two organs of articulation. In American English, it is best represented by the medial consonant sound in *butter* (the [t] is not produced like that in *cat*); in British English, it is best represented by the [r] in *worry*.

folk etymology 1: Word-formative process in which a new word emerges from popular misunderstanding of its form or meaning, as when *plantar wart* (from Latin *planta* 'sole'), a wart on the sole of one's foot, becomes *planter's wart*, presumably because the wart is caused by farm or field work. 2: Commonsense explanation of a word's origin or development other than the word's actual ETYMOLOGY. See also EGGCORN and REANALYSIS.

foot Metrical unit in poetry composed of a certain number of SYLLABLES arranged in a certain pattern of stress. See also ACCENTUAL-SYLLABIC METER, METER, RHYTHM, and SCANSION.

fore-clipping Word shortened from a larger one by loss of its initial element, as in *plane* from *aeroplane*. Also the word-formative process that produces such a word. See also BACKFORMATION, CLIPPING, HIND-CLIPPING, and INNOVATIVE CLIPPING.

form Grammatical class or lexical category of a word. See also FUNCTION.

formant Frequency regions of the sound spectrum of relative intensity that determine the character of a VOWEL Sound.

free morpheme MORPHEME that functions without modification as a word. See also BOUND MORPHEME.

fricative Speech sound, such as /f/, produced when ARTICULATORS are brought so close together that friction is created as air passes through the mouth. See also AFFRICATE, NASAL, OBSTRUENT, and STOP.

front vowel VOWEL sound, like that in *beat*, *bait*, and *bat*, formed when the tongue is placed forward in the mouth. See also BACK VOWEL and CENTRAL VOWEL.

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frontal lobe Part of the brain toward the front of each cerebral hemisphere; the frontal lobe of the LEFT HEMISPHERE contains centers important to LINGUISTIC COMPETENCE and speech production, including BROCA'S AREA. See also OCCIPITAL LOBE, PARIETAL LOBE, and TEMPORAL LOBE.

frontness DISTINCTIVE FEATURE of VOWELS realized when the tongue is placed toward the front of the mouth. See also BACKNESS, FRONT VOWEL, HEIGHT, LAXNESS, and TENSENESS.

FTA ALPHABETISM of FACE-THREATENING ACT. See also FACE, NEGATIVE FACE, NEGATIVE POLITENESS, POLITENESS, POSITIVE FACE, and POSITIVE POLITENESS.

function Role of a word in a PHRASE or CLAUSE. See also FORM.

functional shift Word-formative process in which a word historically belonging to one LEXICAL CATEGORY begins to function in another, as when the verb *swim* functions as the noun *swim*—“Did you have a good swim?” See also SEMANTIC SHIFT.

gender Grammatical category that depends on the contrasts among masculine/feminine/neuter, used to classify NOUNS, PRONOUNS, and ADJECTIVES. See also GRAMMATICAL GENDER and NATURAL GENDER.

generalization Process of semantic change in which a word with a specific meaning develops one or more related senses and so becomes a word of more general significance; for instance, in the fourteenth century, *ceiling* meant, narrowly, ‘wooden lining of roof or walls of a room’ but later came to mean the upper limit of a room and, even later, any upper limit (e.g., *price ceiling*). See also AMELIORATION, DYSPEMISM, EUPHEMISM, HYPOONYMY, MERONYMY, PEJORATION, POLYSEMY, SPECIALIZATION, and SYNONYMY.

genre Category of texts that share certain formal characteristics and textual functions (such as sonnet, novel of manners, and even résumé) and serve to shape audience response. See also REGISTER.

gerund VERB form constructed with the suffix *-ing* that functions as a NOUN, as in “*Reading* is fundamental!”

gesture Meaningful nonverbal supplements to conversation. See also CONVERSATIONAL FLOOR, EYE CONTACT, INTONATION, QUESTION, SILENCE, TURN, and TURN-TAKING VIOLATION.

glide Speech sound produced by transition from one speech sound to another, such as /w/ and /j/. See also APPROXIMANT, BUNCHED /R/, LATERAL LIQUID, LIQUID, and RETROFLEX LIQUID.

glottal stop Speech sound produced in the LARYNX, when the **glottis**, or opening between the VOCAL CORDS, is closed and then audibly released. See also EPIGLOTTIS and STOP.

gradable antonyms ANTONYMS that are conceptually opposite, but not absolutely so; *long* and *short* are opposites, but some short things are nearly as long as some long things. See also ANTONYMS, COMPLEMENTARY ANTONYMS, CONVERSENESS, and NONGRADABLE ANTONYMS.

grammar Structure and rules governing a language at the levels of PHONOLOGY, MORPHOLOGY, SYNTAX, and SEMANTICS and arguably DISCOURSE. Features of a language that conform to such rules, and are therefore comprehensible to other native speakers of the language, are characterized as **grammatical**.

grammatical gender GENDER marked to associate words within a sentence as syntactically related, without reference to gender of real-world persons or things. See also NATURAL GENDER.

grammaticalization Process in which an open-class word becomes a grammatical form, as when Old English *lic* ‘body’ later functions as the adjective suffix *-ly*, as in *manly*.

hard palate Front surface of the roof of the mouth, leading forward to the ALVEOLAR RIDGE and back to the SOFT PALATE.

height DISTINCTIVE FEATURE of VOWELS determined by the relative position (high, low, or mid) of the tongue when producing the sound. See also BACKNESS, FRONTNESS, LAXNESS, and TENSENESS.

hind-clipping Word shortened from a larger one by loss of its final element, as in *jet* from *jetpropelled plane*. Also the word-formative process that produces such a word. See also BACKFORMATION, CLIPPING, FORE-CLIPPING, and INNOVATIVE CLIPPING.

historical linguistics Branch of LINGUISTICS focused on the development of language over time, also called DIACHRONIC linguistics.

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homographs Words spelled identically, though of distinct origin and different meanings, and perhaps pronounced differently, such as *wind* ‘moving air’ and *wind* ‘coil; turn; wrap.’ See also HOMONYMS and HOMOPHONES.

homonyms Words of different meanings that take the same form, such as *cleave* ‘join’ and *cleave* ‘divide, separate, sunder.’ See also HOMOGRAPH and HOMOPHONES.

homophones Words of different meanings and distinct origins pronounced (more or less) the same, such as *witch* and *which*. See also HOMOGRAPH and HOMONYM.

hypercorrection Linguistic form, structure, or pronunciation that a speaker supposes to be correct (or formal) in a variety that he or she does not control fully, thus, usually a result of STYLE-SHIFTING; for instance, ‘They gave a wonderful gift to Janie and I’ is a hypercorrection of ‘They gave a wonderful gift to Janie and me.’ Also, use of such a form, structure, or pronunciation.

hypernym Word of more general meaning than others defined in relation to it; for instance, *vehicle* is a hypernym for *car*, *bus*, *bicycle*, *motorcycle*, etc. Also called a SUPERORDINATE. See also HYPONYM.

hyponym Word semantically subordinate to a HYPERNYM or SUPERORDINATE and semantically parallel to other words subordinate to the same term; for instance, *car*, *bus*, *bicycle*, and *motorcycle* are all hyponyms under *vehicle*; their semantic relationship to one another, as well as to their hypernym, is called **hyponymy**.

hypotactic SYNTAX or STYLE characterized by subordination. See also PARATACTIC.

idiom Expression whose meaning cannot be derived directly from the elements of which it is composed; for instance, *My dogs are barkin'* ‘My feet hurt’ is an idiom; such statements are **idiomatic** and are a sort of ‘discourse metaphor.’ See also METAPHOR and METAPHORICAL EXTENSION.

illocutionary act In SPEECH ACT THEORY, intended or conventional meaning that can accompany a LOCUTIONARY ACT within the compass of an UTTERANCE. See also CONSTATIVE SPEECH ACT, DIRECT SPEECH ACT, INDIRECT SPEECH ACT, LOCUTIONARY ACT, PRAGMATICS, PERFORMATIVE SPEECH ACT, and PERLOCUTIONARY ACT.

implicature Meaning implied in addition to the truth-conditional meaning of a proposition. See also ENTAILMENT.

indefinite pronoun PRONOUN, like *all*, *anything*, *everyone*, *no one*, *something*, or *whatever*, that represents an unknown or unspecified element in a CLAUSE.

independent clause CLAUSE that is a complete SENTENCE. See also DEPENDENT CLAUSE.

indexical meaning Meaning within DISCOURSE that depends on context outside the discourse, including social circumstances and the construction or maintenance of social identities, etc. Speech is thus **indexed** to context, and speakers **index** their discourse to phenomena outside it.

indirect object To or for whom a verb’s action is done; in the sentence, ‘I wrote my best friend a letter,’ *best friend* is the indirect object. See also DIRECT OBJECT.

indirect speech Within a NARRATIVE, speech of one reported by another. See also DIRECT SPEECH.

indirect speech act SPEECH ACT in which a LOCUTIONARY ACT does not directly correspond to an ILLOCUTIONARY ACT. See also CONSTATIVE SPEECH ACT, DIRECT SPEECH ACT, PERFORMATIVE SPEECH ACT, PERLOCUTIONARY SPEECH ACT, PRAGMATICS, and SPEECH ACT THEORY.

infinitive NONFINITE form of a VERB that serves as the base for inflectional development or expresses the core meaning of the verb, without concern for NUMBER or PERSON; in late Middle and Modern English, the infinitive is often marked with the PARTICLE *to*; in ‘We prefer to mark infinitives with *to*,’ the phrase *to mark* is the infinitive.

infix 1: AFFIX inserted into a word at an appropriate morphophonemic boundary; also called an INSERT, such as *-ma-* in *edumacation*. 2: Word-formative process involving such affixing. 3: Word resulting from that process, such as *edumacation*. Usage is unsettled, and some linguists and language scholars prefer **infixing** for senses 2 and 3.

inflectional morpheme MORPHEME that indicates something about a word’s grammatical function, such as NUMBER or TENSE; in English, such morphemes are generally (but not always) realized in a suffix—for instance, plurals are usually marked with a suffix like *-s* (*dogs*) or *-en*

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(*oxen*), though the plural morpheme in *deer* is not. See also DERIVATIONAL MORPHEME and ZERO MORPHEME.

initialism Word formed from the first letters of words in a phrase or compound name, as in *FBI* for *F*(ederal) *B*(ureau of) *I*(nvestigation) or *ACLU* for *A*(merican) *C*(ivil) *L*(iberties) *U*(nion); also, the word-formative process that results in such a word. Also called ALPHABETISM.

innovative clipping Word shortened from a larger one at a point other than a morphemic boundary, as in *nuke* from *nuclear weapon*. Also the word-formative process that produces such a word. See also BACKFORMATION, CLIPPING, FORE-CLIPPING, and HIND-CLIPPING.

insert In INFIXING and INTERPOSING, the BOUND MORPHEME, word, or phrase that interrupts the MATRIX; for instance, in *edumacation*, *-ma-* is the insert, whereas in *guaranfuckinteed*, *-fuckin-* is the insert.

insertion Phonological process in which a sound is added to a word, as in the /k/ in some pronunciations of *length* or /t/ in some pronunciations of *wash*.

International Phonetic Alphabet Set of symbols and DIACRITICS designed by the International Phonetic Association to represent phonemes of the world's languages, as well as their realization in speech. Also called IPA.

interposing Word-formative process involving insertion of a word or words into a fixed or idiomatic phrase, as in "No fucking way!" (*fucking* inserted into the idiomatic phrase *No way!*). See also INFIX, INSERT, and MATRIX.

interrogative pronoun Set of *wh*- PRONOUNS, such as *who*, *what*, and *which*, that represent unknown elements in sentences that are questions.

interruption Attempt by one party to take the CONVERSATIONAL FLOOR from the speaker who occupies it. See also OVERLAP and TURN-TAKING VIOLATION.

intonation 1: Change in PITCH that indicates something about sentence meaning; for instance, in Standard American English, rising intonation usually indicates that a sentence is a question. 2: Change in PITCH that may indicate a participant's desire to relinquish or retain the CONVERSATIONAL FLOOR. See also EYE CONTACT, GESTURE, INTONATION, QUESTION, SILENCE, TURN, and TURN-TAKING VIOLATION.

intransitive verb VERB that either does not require or cannot take a DIRECT OBJECT; the essential property of such verbs is **intransitivity**. See also DITRANSITIVE VERB, OBJECT-PREDICATIVE VERB, and TRANSITIVE VERB.

isogloss Line that separates an area that uses one lexical item, grammatical construction, or pronunciation from another area on a dialect map; a DIALECT boundary.

language contact Process in which speakers enrich dialectal vocabulary by adopting items from a contact language. See also BORROWING, COINING, NATURALLY OCCURRING INTERNAL LANGUAGE CHANGE, RETENTION, SOCIAL FACTOR, and STRUCTURAL INFLUENCE.

langue Underlying, abstract system of language; relationships of linguistic signs to one another both in the lexicon and in syntax of a language. See also *PAROLE*.

larynx Muscular, cartilaginous part of the respiratory tract that contains the VOCAL CORDS.

lateral liquid The PHONEME /l/, so called because, in its production, air passes along the sides of the tongue. See also APPROXIMANT, BUNCHED /r/, GLIDE, LIQUID, and RETROFLEX LIQUID.

lateralization Distribution of a function, such as speech, to the RIGHT or LEFT HEMISPHERE of the brain.

laxness DISTINCTIVE FEATURE of VOWELS indicating the relatively loose (central) or tense (peripheral) position of the tongue. Also called TENSENESS. See also BACKNESS, FRONTNESS, HEIGHT, and LAX VOWEL.

left hemisphere Part of the brain the FRONTAL LOBE of which contains centers important to LINGUISTIC COMPETENCE and speech production, including BROCA'S AREA and WERNICKE'S AREA.

lexical category Grammatical function of a word, such as NOUN, PREPOSITION, CONJUNCTION, ADVERB, etc.

lexical cohesion COHESION achieved by repetition of words, COLLOCATIONS, or SYNONYMS across sentences.

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lexical field Set of words that, on some conceptual basis, belong together; for instance, *annual*, *journal*, *magazine*, *monthly*, *newspaper*, *periodical*, *quarterly*, and *weekly* all belong to the same lexical field.

lexical gap Blank space in a LEXICON, such that a concept lacks a word in a particular language to represent it.

lexical prototype semantics Theory of meaning in which IMAGE SCHEMAS at least partially represent lexical development.

lexicography 1: Art and craft of writing dictionaries. 2: Writing about the LEXICON, whether in dictionaries or elsewhere.

lexicon Collection of a language's MORPHEMES, whether in a speaker's mind or in a book; the vocabulary of a language, broadly conceived.

lexifier language Language from which the bulk of a CREOLE vocabulary comes. See also ACROLECT, BASILECT, MESOLECT, and PIDGIN.

lingua franca Common language developed or adopted in specific contexts to facilitate communications among speakers who do not share a common language.

linguistic competence Innate human ability to acquire and use language, given certain biological and developmental constraints. See also LINGUISTIC PERFORMANCE.

linguistic determinism System in which linguistic categories establish the parameters of cognition. See also LINGUISTIC RELATIVITY.

linguistic market Social arena in which the value of one's speech depends on the linguistic variety in which it is encoded. See also COMMUNITY OF PRACTICE, SOCIOLINGUISTICS, SPEECH COMMUNITY, and VARIATIONIST SOCIOLINGUISTICS.

linguistic performance A speaker's utterances in a given language, as opposed to his or her innate LINGUISTIC COMPETENCE.

linguistic relativity System in which cognition varies or develops according to linguistic variation. See also LINGUISTIC DETERMINISM.

linguistic sign Linguistic entity that joins SIGNIFIER and SIGNIFIED in one linguistic representation.

linguistics Study of language in any or all of its aspects.

linking verb VERB, such as *be* or *seem*, that more or less identifies the SUBJECT and PREDICATE of a sentence as the same.

liquid CONSONANT produced when ARTICULATORS are in proximity to each other but do not impede airflow, such as /l/ and /r/. See also APPROXIMANT, BUNCHED /r/, GLIDE, LATERAL LIQUID, and RETROFLEX LIQUID.

loan translation Word simultaneously BORROWED and translated from an etymological language; for instance, American English *groundhog* is a loan translation of Dutch *aardvark*. See also CALQUE.

localization Distribution of mental tasks to specific sites in the brain; for instance, speech production and language centers are located in the FRONTAL LOBE of the left hemisphere. Also called MODULARITY OF MIND. See also BROCA'S AREA and WERNICKE'S AREA.

locutionary act In SPEECH ACT THEORY, the sounds and words that compose the supposedly referential meaning of an UTTERANCE. See also CONSTATIVE SPEECH ACT, DIRECT SPEECH ACT, ILLOCUTIONARY ACT, INDIRECT SPEECH ACT, PERFORMATIVE SPEECH ACT, PERLOCUTIONARY ACT, PRAGMATICS, and SPEECH ACT THEORY.

main clause INDEPENDENT CLAUSE in which a DEPENDENT CLAUSE is embedded.

malapropism Verbal slip in which a similar word is substituted for an intended one, as when Mrs. Malaprop (the character from Richard Sheridan's play *The Rivals* [1775], who gave the slip its name) says that someone "is the very pineapple of politeness," when she means *pinnacle*. Usually, malapropism occurs when the speaker tries to use an unfamiliar word in an effort to seem especially intelligent or sophisticated. See also ANTICIPATION, PRESERVATION, and SPOONERISM.

manner adverb ADVERB that describes how an action or state occurs, such as *softly* or *swiftly*. See also DISCOURSE ADVERB, SENTENCE ADVERB, and TEMPORAL ADVERB.

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manner of articulation DISTINCTIVE FEATURE that describes proximity of ARTICULATORS and the accompanying effect on airflow in production of a speech sound. See also PLACE OF ARTICULATION and VOICING.

marginal auxiliary VERBS, like *dare* and *need*, that behave somewhat like AUXILIARY VERBS. See also MODAL AUXILIARY.

matrix Lexical base on which either an INFIXING or INTERPOSING is made. See also AFFIX, INFIX, INSERT, and INTERPOSING.

maxims of manner Components of the COOPERATIVE PRINCIPLE, literally, “Avoid obscurity of expression; avoid ambiguity” and “Be brief; be orderly.” See also MAXIMS OF QUALITY, MAXIMS OF QUANTITY, and MAXIMS OF RELATION.

maxims of quality Components of the COOPERATIVE PRINCIPLE, literally, “Do not say what you believe to be false”; “Do not say that for which you lack adequate evidence.” See also MAXIMS OF MANNER, MAXIMS OF QUANTITY, and MAXIMS OF RELATION.

maxims of quantity Components of the COOPERATIVE PRINCIPLE, literally, “Make your contributions as informative as required”; “Do not make your contribution more informative than is required.” See also MAXIMS OF MANNER, MAXIMS OF QUALITY, MAXIMS OF RELATION.

maxims of relation Components of the COOPERATIVE PRINCIPLE, literally, “Be relevant.” See also MAXIMS OF MANNER, MAXIMS OF QUALITY, and MAXIMS OF QUANTITY.

McGurk Effect Name for the discovery (by Harry McGurk and John McDonald) that what we see can affect what we think we hear.

meronym Lexical item that participates in a whole/part relationship, such as *whiskers*, *ears*, *tail*, and *cat*. The lexical relationship is called **meronymy**. See also HYPONYM.

mesolect CREOLE historically and developmentally between its acrolectal and basilectal stages. See also ACROLECT, BASILECT, and LEXIFIER LANGUAGE.

metaphor Figurative language in which a word or phrase that designates one thing is applied to another, as a form of comparison. For instance, these lines from Shakespeare’s *Macbeth* are chock full of metaphors:

Life’s but a walking shadow, a poor player,
That struts and frets his hour upon the stage,
And then is heard no more; it is a tale
Told by an idiot, full of sound and fury,
Signifying nothing.

Life is not, in fact, a walking shadow, a poor player, or an idiot’s tale, but metaphor compares two dissimilar things in order to draw out their similarities.

metaphorical extension SEMANTIC SHIFT in which a word takes on a metaphorical sense, as when *virus* in the biological/medical sense is applied to antagonistic, invasive computer programs. See also IDIOM and METAPHOR.

metathesis Phonological process in which sounds switch places in the phonemic structure of a word, as when Old/Middle English *bridde* becomes Middle/Modern English *bird* or *aks* becomes *ask*.

meter Patterned arrangement of words in poetry, for instance, according to stress, number of syllables, or vowel length, etc., or some combination of these. See also ACCENTUAL-SYLLABIC METER, PURE ACCENTUAL METER, PURE SYLLABIC METER, RHYTHM, and SCANSION.

mimetic Imitative, in some sense, whether ONOMATOPOEIA or some broader imitative effect of literary speech.

minimal pair Words distinguished by only one DISTINCTIVE FEATURE of one sound, as in *pat* and *bat*.

minimal response In conversation, any indication that a participant is paying attention; backchanneling may be verbal (“yeah” or “uh-huh” or “mmm”) or nonverbal (as in head nodding). See also BACK-CHANNELING.

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misplaced participle Participial phrase placed next to a constituent that it does not modify, for instance, in “Dangling from the beginning of her sentence, Alisse misplaced her participle.” See also DANGLING PARTICIPLE.

modal auxiliary VERB used in combination with another verb to indicate MODALITY of that other verb; in English, *can*, *may*, and *must*, etc., are MODAL AUXILIARIES, also called **modals**. See also AUXILIARY VERB, DEONTIC MODAL AUXILIARY, and EPISTEMIC MODAL AUXILIARY.

modality Conditionality, necessity, possibility, etc., that qualify a VERB, expressed by various means, whether in the verb, a MODAL AUXILIARY, certain CONJUNCTIONS, sentence structure, or in a combination of these. See also MOOD.

modularity of the mind Distribution of mental tasks to specific sites in the brain; for instance, speech production and language centers are located in the FRONTAL LOBE of the LEFT HEMISPHERE. Also called LOCALIZATION. See also BROCA’S AREA and WERNICKE’S AREA.

mood GRAMMATICAL expression of conditionality, necessity, possibility in a VERB by various means. In English, moods include the indicative (“I love grammar”), the interrogative (“Have you studied grammar?”), the imperative (“Read grammar!”), and the conditional (“If you study grammar, then you will have a happy life”). See also ASPECT, MODALITY, and TENSE.

morpheme Smallest meaningful unit of language; independently meaningful part of a word. The adjective form of *morpheme* is **morphemic**. See also ALLOMORPH, BOUND MORPHEME, and FREE MORPHEME.

morphology Study of word forms and the processes by which words are formed.

morphology tree Diagrammatic representation of a word’s hierarchical MORPHEMIC structure.

Movement Test CONSTITUENCY TEST in which one moves a supposed CONSTITUENT to different syntactic positions in order to determine whether it is, in fact, a constituent. See also COORDINATION TEST, STAND ALONE TEST, and SUBSTITUTION TEST.

multiplexity Number of capacities in which members of a social network know one another. See also DENSITY and SOCIAL NETWORK THEORY.

narrative Story or structured account of events, as distinguished from DESCRIPTION, EXPOSITION, and PERSUASION.

nasal STOP produced when air flows from the lungs through the nose, such as [m], [n], and [ŋ], the final sounds in *sum*, *sin*, and *sting*. See also AFFRICATE, FRICATIVE, and OBSTRUENT.

natural class Set of sounds that share features in such a way as to include all sounds in the set and to exclude all others; for instance, /p, b/ is the natural class of bilabial oral stops.

natural gender GENDER marked grammatically to reflect the gender of real-world persons or things. See also GRAMMATICAL GENDER.

naturally occurring internal language change Process in which the dialectal vocabulary is enriched by the sorts of change and variation that occur within any SPEECH COMMUNITY. See also BORROWING, COINAGE, LANGUAGE CONTACT, RETENTION, SOCIAL FACTOR, and STRUCTURAL INFLUENCE.

negation Contradiction expressed within a sentence of at least part of that sentence’s meaning; in terms of SYNTAX accomplished by use of *not*: “Negation is what I’m trying to express here” does not exhibit negation, whereas “Negation is not what I’m trying to express here” does.

negative face Desire to be unimpeded in one’s actions which, in part, determines conversational POLITENESS. See also FACE, FACE-THREATENING ACT, FTA, NEGATIVE POLITENESS, POLITENESS, POSITIVE FACE, and POSITIVE POLITENESS.

negative politeness Respecting another’s NEGATIVE FACE, especially by using markers of deference, apology, etc. See also FACE, FACE-THREATENING ACT, FTA, POLITENESS, POSITIVE FACE, and POSITIVE POLITENESS.

node In a PHRASE, CLAUSE, or SENTENCE structure TREE, the point at which one CONSTITUENT level is distinguished from another, in order to indicate syntactic hierarchy. See also BRANCH.

nominal Any CONSTITUENT that functions as a NOUN. See also ADJECTIVAL and ADVERBIAL.

nonce word Word created for a specific purpose in a specific context.

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nonfinite verb VERB form, such as the INFINITIVE or the PARTICIPLE, that does not express TENSE. See also FINITE VERB.

nongradable antonyms Terms representing absolute opposites, such as *alive* and *dead*, that cannot be considered in comparative terms, as “more” or “less” what they are; also called COMPLEMENTARY ANTONYMS. See also ANTONYMS, CONVERSENESS, and GRADABLE ANTONYMS.

nonrestrictive clause CLAUSE that provides additional information about a NOUN or noun phrase but does not specify or restrict the referent, for instance, “One of the earliest English grammars was written in Latin, which is pretty amusing when you think about it.” See also RESTRICTIVE RELATIVE CLAUSE.

noun Word that represents a person, place, thing, quality, action, concept, idea, etc., and that functions as SUBJECT or OBJECT in a SENTENCE; also, a LEXICAL CATEGORY including such words. See also NOMINAL and PRONOUN.

nucleus VOWEL required as the central PHONEME of a SYLLABLE; for instance, /o/ is the nucleus of *boat*. See also CODA and ONSET.

number Grammatical indication that a NOUN, PRONOUN, ADJECTIVE, or VERB is singular, dual, or plural.

object NOUN, noun phrase, or PRONOUN that receives the action of a VERB or is governed by a PREPOSITION in a prepositional phrase; also the CASE in which such a word functions. See also DIRECT OBJECT, INDIRECT OBJECT, and SUBJECT.

object-predicative verb VERB that connects an object-predicative to an OBJECT, as in “We called them silly.” See also DITRANSITIVE VERB, INTRANSITIVE VERB, and TRANSITIVE VERB.

objectivism Theory of the relationship between language and thought in which people have access to an external or nonmental reality regardless of language. See also LINGUISTIC DETERMINISM and LINGUISTIC RELATIVISM.

Observer's Paradox Reluctance of folks to speak naturally in the presence of observers when observers need them to speak naturally.

obstruent Speech sound, such as an AFFRICATE, FRICATIVE, or oral STOP, produced with obstruction of air flow in the mouth. See also NASAL.

occipital lobe Area toward the lower rear of the LEFT HEMISPHERE responsible for, among other things, vision. See also FRONTAL LOBE, PARIETAL LOBE, and TEMPORAL LOBE.

offglide Speech sound produced when a VOWEL moves into a GLIDE, as (repeatedly) in “How now, brown cow?” See also ONGLIDE.

onglide Speech sound produced when a GLIDE moves into a VOWEL, as in some pronunciations of *Tuesday*. See also OFFGLIDE.

onomatopoeia Creation or use of words with sounds that imitate those associated with the things to which they refer, such as *buzz* and *gasp*!

onset Optional, initial PHONEME in a SYLLABLE; for instance, /k/ in *cot* is an onset. See also CODA and NUCLEUS.

open morphological class LEXICAL CATEGORY to which new items can be added, such as ADJECTIVE, NOUN, and VERB. See also CLOSED MORPHOLOGICAL CLASS.

oral sound Speech sound, such as an AFFRICATE, FRICATIVE, or STOP, produced by funneling air through the mouth.

orientation Background information that clarifies setting and characters of a NARRATIVE. See also ABSTRACT, CODA, COMPLICATING ACTION, EVALUATION, and RESOLUTION.

overlap Concurrent speech by two or more participants in a conversation, when one mistakenly believes that the participant who holds the CONVERSATIONAL FLOOR has relinquished it and thus takes a TURN. See also INTERRUPTION and TURN-TAKING VIOLATION.

overt prestige Value that a variety of a language carries within a speech community. See also COVERT PRESTIGE.

paratactic SYNTAX or STYLE characterized by coordination. See also HYPOTACTIC.

parentese Version of language that adults (including nonparents) use when talking to young children.

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parietal lobe Area in the upper rear of the LEFT HEMISPHERE of the brain responsible for, among other things, sense of touch. See also FRONTAL LOBE, OCCIPITAL LOBE, and TEMPORAL LOBE.

parole Actual speech, as opposed to *langue*.

parse Analyze a SENTENCE into component parts.

part of speech LEXICAL CATEGORY to which a word belongs and according to which it functions grammatically.

particle Word with the FORM of a PREPOSITION or ADVERB, such as the infinitive marker *to*, that does not FUNCTION as a preposition or adverb.

passive construction Results of TRANSFORMATION in which a SENTENCE'S DIRECT OBJECT becomes the grammatical SUBJECT and the AGENT NOUN or noun PHRASE moves to the end of the sentence; or, you might say that the object is moved to the position of the grammatical subject—if you want to use a passive construction.

past participle PARTICIPLE derived from a bare infinitive form of a VERB by addition of *-ed* / *-en* or an internal vowel change, as in “The definitions *provided* in this glossary did not fall from the sky.”

past tense TENSE that indicates an action that has already occurred or a state that has already been the case.

pejoration Semantic process in which a term of neutral significance takes on a negative meaning. See also AMELIORATION, DYSPEMISM, and EUPHEMISM.

perceptual dialectology Study of how speakers perceive variation. See also DIALECTOLOGY, SOCIOLINGUISTICS, and VARIATIONIST SOCIOLINGUISTICS.

perfect aspect ASPECT that indicates completed action, formed by *have* + PAST PARTICIPLE.

performative speech act Utterance that explicitly states or entails the action that it performs, as in “I now pronounce you husband and wife”—the words and the act are one and the same. See also DIRECT SPEECH ACT, ILLOCUTIONARY ACT, INDIRECT SPEECH ACT, LOCUTIONARY ACT, PERLOCUTIONARY ACT, PRAGMATICS, SPEECH ACT, and SPEECH ACT THEORY.

periphrastic do Auxiliary *do* that substitutes for verbal inflection, as when “I did look it up in the glossary” replaces “I looked it up in the glossary.”

perlocutionary act In SPEECH ACT THEORY, the effect achieved by an UTTERANCE on a hearer. See also CONSTATIVE SPEECH ACT, DIRECT SPEECH ACT, ILLOCUTIONARY ACT, INDIRECT SPEECH ACT, LOCUTIONARY ACT, PERFORMATIVE SPEECH ACT, PRAGMATICS, and SPEECH ACT.

personal deixis Reference to a person who figures directly in the circumstance in which an UTTERANCE is made, usually by means of a PERSONAL PRONOUN. See also DEIXIS, SPATIAL DEIXIS, and TEMPORAL DEIXIS.

personal pronoun Word that indicates grammatical person, NUMBER, and CASE of a person or thing, in place of a common NOUN or name; also the LEXICAL CATEGORY to which such a word belongs. See also PRONOUN.

persuasion Argument for how things were, are, or ought to be, as distinct from NARRATIVE. See also DESCRIPTION and EXPOSITION.

phoneme Distinctive sound of a language. See also ALLOPHONE and DISTINCTIVE FEATURES.

phonetics Description and classification of sounds and the study of their production and perception. See also ACOUSTIC PHONETICS, ARTICULATORY PHONETICS, AUDITORY PHONETICS, and PHONOLOGY.

phonological dyslexia DYSLEXIA in which speakers struggle to read unfamiliar or nonsense words aloud. See also DEEP DYSLEXIA and SURFACE DYSLEXIA.

phonology Study of sound systems and sound change, usually within a particular language or family of languages. See also PHONETICS.

phonotactic constraint Rules for what sounds or sequences of sound can occur in the ONSET or CODA of a SYLLABLE in a particular language.

phrasal verb VERB formed from two or more words, such as *bail out*, *freak out*, and *pass out*.

phrase Any meaningful sequence of words below the level of the CLAUSE.

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phrase structure rule Rule that generates allowable CONSTITUENTS within sentence TREES.

pidgin Highly simplified communicative system that arises when adult speakers who share no common language need to communicate with each other. See also CREOLE.

pitch Rate of repetition or vibration of the VOCAL CORDS in the production of speech sounds.

place of articulation DISTINCTIVE FEATURE that indicates the location of ARTICULATORS in the production of speech sounds. See also MANNER OF ARTICULATION and VOICING.

politeness Ways in which speakers adapt (or do not adapt) to the needs and wants of other participants in conversation. See also FACE, FACE-THREATENING ACT, FTA, NEGATIVE FACE, NEGATIVE POLITENESS, POSITIVE FACE, and POSITIVE POLITENESS.

polysemy General semantic process by which a single word develops many meanings; also, a quality such words express; the adjective form is **polysemous**. See also AMELIORATION, DYSPEMISM, EUPHEMISM, GENERALIZATION, HYPONYMY, MERONYMY, PEJORATION, and SYNONYMY.

positive face Desire to be approved of or liked by other participants in conversation; in part, determines conversational POLITENESS. See also FACE, FACE-THREATENING ACT, FTA, NEGATIVE FACE, NEGATIVE POLITENESS, and POSITIVE POLITENESS.

positive politeness Enhancing the POSITIVE FACE of others in conversation, for instance, by means of compliments and other markers of friendliness. See also FACE, FACE-THREATENING ACT, FTA, NEGATIVE FACE, NEGATIVE POLITENESS, and POLITENESS.

pragmatics Study of how we communicate in language, with emphasis on SPEECH ACT THEORY; an approach to DISCOURSE ANALYSIS. See also CONSTATIVE SPEECH ACT, DIRECT SPEECH ACT, ILLOCUTIONARY ACT, INDIRECT SPEECH ACT, LOCUTIONARY ACT, PERFORMATIVE SPEECH ACT, PERLOCUTIONARY ACT, SPEECH ACT, and SPEECH ACT THEORY.

predicate VERB and elements governed by a verb in a CLAUSE or SENTENCE; also called a PREDICATIVE, which serves as the adjective form, as well. See also ATTRIBUTIVE.

predicative Noun or adjective phrase in the verb COMPLEMENT that modifies a SUBJECT or OBJECT. See also ATTRIBUTIVE.

prefix AFFIX attached to the front of a word, in English usually a DERIVATIONAL MORPHEME.

prefixing 1: Word-formative process involving a PREFIX. 2: Word resulting from that process.

preposition Word, such as *at*, *by*, *from*, and *with*, that indicates the relation of a NOUN, PRO-NOUN, NOUN PHRASE, or NOMINAL to another NOUN, VERB, or ADJECTIVE, especially relations of location, direction, duration, manner, etc.; also, the LEXICAL CATEGORY of such a word.

prescriptive rule Statement of what supposedly *should* occur in a language or languages, rather than what has occurred or does occur. See also DESCRIPTIVE RULE.

prescriptivist Person inclined to regulate language as he or she believes it *should* be, rather than describe what it is, has been, or will be; as an adjective, typical of such a person's attitude toward language. See also DESCRIPTIVIST.

present participle PARTICIPLE derived from a bare infinitive form of a VERB by addition of the suffix *-ing*, as in "Glossary entries aren't *falling* out of the sky."

preservation Verbal slip in which an earlier sound is also accidentally retained in a later position in a word or phrase, as in *big bilch* for *big belch*. See also ANTICIPATION, MALAPROPISM, and SPOONERISM.

presupposition Assumption that makes the truth of a proposition or UTTERANCE possible, as when the assumption of a "king of France" allows us to consider the truth of the claim that "The present king of France is bald."

priming Mental activation of a word's lexical associations and COLLOCATES.

proclitic CLITIC that attaches to the word following it. See also ENCLITIC.

progressive aspect ASPECT that indicates continuing action, formed by the appropriate form of *be*+the PRESENT PARTICIPLE.

projection rules System that guides words into appropriate syntactic roles. See also THEMATIC ROLES.

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pronoun Word that within a syntactic structure stands in for a NOUN or noun phrase. See also DEMONSTRATIVE PRONOUN, INDEFINITE PRONOUN, INTERROGATIVE PRONOUN, PERSONAL PRONOUN, REFLEXIVE PRONOUN, and RELATIVE PRONOUN.

prosody 1: Distribution of INTONATION and stress. 2: Systematic arrangement of intonation and stress in poetry. See also ACCENTUAL-SYLLABIC METER, METER, PURE ACCENTUAL METER, PURE SYLLABIC METER, RHYTHM, and SCANSION.

proto-language Language of which there is no written evidence, but which can be reconstructed from the evidence of related written languages, according to systematic rules of historical sound change and word formation; for instance, proto-Indo-European, Germanic, and Italic are proto-languages of particular importance to the development of English.

prototype Mental “best examples” of things that allow speakers to structure linguistic categories and create meaningful semantic relationships.

psycholinguistics Study of the relationships among language, mind, and the brain, including processes of language acquisition; also called “cognitive linguistics.”

pure accentual meter Patterned distribution of stress among SYLLABLES in a poetic line. See also ACCENTUAL-SYLLABIC METER, METER, PURE SYLLABIC METER, RHYTHM, and SCANSION.

pure syllabic meter Pattern of SYLLABLES per line of poetry, as in haiku. See also ACCENTUAL-SYLLABIC METER, METER, PURE ACCENTUAL METER, RHYTHM, and SCANSION.

question In conversation, a means of taking TURNS, often by constructing ADJACENCY PAIRS. See also CONVERSATIONAL FLOOR, EYE CONTACT, GESTURE, INTONATION, SILENCE, TURN, and TURN-TAKING VIOLATION.

reanalysis Word-formative process that redistributes PHONEMES to create new MORPHEMES, as when a *napron* becomes an *apron*. See also EGgcorn and FOLK ETYMOLOGY.

reappropriation Process of claiming or reclaiming a historically derogatory term by a community that has been oppressed or stigmatized by that term. See also AMELIORATION, DYSPEHMISM, EUPHEMISM, and PEJORATION.

recursion Capacity of language to embed an infinite number of elements into its grammatical structure.

reduplication Word-formative process in which MORPHEMES (or rhymes of morphemes) are repeated, such as *boo boo*, *hanky-panky*, or *car car*, as in “Did you buy a car car or an SUV?”

reflex Word derived from an older form, whether in the same or a different language, called an ETYMON. For instance, Modern English *ask* is a reflex of Old English *ācsian*. It may be helpful to think of an etymon as a “parent” (or great-great-grandparent) word, a REFLEX as a “child” (or great-great-grandchild) word, and COGNATES as “cousin” words.

reflexive pronoun PRONOUN that represents an entity identical to a subject, such as *herself*, *himself*, *itself*, *myself*, *themselves*, *yourself*, and *yourselves*.

register Text type that exhibits characteristics that distinguish it from other text types; for instance, personal letters constitute a register distinct from résumés, etc. See also GENRE.

relative clause DEPENDENT CLAUSE typically introduced by a RELATIVE PRONOUN that functions as an ADJECTIVAL.

relative pronoun PRONOUN used to introduce a RELATIVE CLAUSE, such as *that*, *which*, *who*, *whom*, and *whose*.

relevance Assumption, given the COOPERATIVE PRINCIPLE, that speakers’ contributions to conversation will have an optimal bearing on the matter at hand.

repair Attempt to restore cooperation or POLITENESS to a conversation when either has broken down. See also COOPERATIVE PRINCIPLE.

representative ILLOCUTIONARY ACT that represents a state of affairs, characterized, for instance, by stating, claiming, insisting, suggesting, etc. Representatives are also called ASSERTIVES. See also COMMISSIVE, DECLARATION, DIRECTIVE, EXPRESSIVE, and VERDICTIVE.

resolution Closing material about what finally happens in a NARRATIVE. See also ABSTRACT, CODA, COMPLICATING ACTION, EVALUATION, and ORIENTATION.

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restrictive relative clause CLAUSE that specifies the referent of the NOUN or noun phrase it modifies. See also NONRESTRICTIVE CLAUSE.

retention Process in which speakers establish dialectal vocabulary by bringing dialects/languages with them at emigration/migration. See also BORROWING, COINING, LANGUAGE CONTACT, NATURALLY OCCURRING INTERNAL LANGUAGE CHANGE, SOCIAL FACTOR, and STRUCTURAL INFLUENCE.

retroflex liquid Speech sound produced when the tongue is curled up toward the top of the mouth and air is funneled over it. See also APPROXIMANT, BUNCHED /R/, GLIDE, LATERAL LIQUID, and LIQUID.

retronymy Word-formative process that creates words or phrases (*snail mail* or *regular mail*) to augment or replace words once used alone (*mail*), in order to distinguish them from new words or phrases (*e-mail* or *express mail*) for new developments.

rhyme Correspondence of word-final sounds generally, but especially among poetic lines or parts of those lines. See also EYE RHYMES.

rhythm Arrangement of stress in natural speech. See also METER and SCANSION.

right hemisphere Side of the brain responsible for interpreting spatial relationships, jokes, and irony. See also LEFT HEMISPHERE.

run-on sentence COMPLEX or COMPOUND SENTENCE ill-formed because it lacks hierarchical markers, such as CONJUNCTIONS.

scansion Symbolic representation of METER. See also ACCENTUAL-SYLLABIC METER, METER, PURE ACCENTUAL METER, PURE SYLLABIC METER, and RHYTHM.

semantics Systematic study of meaning in language, especially word and sentence meaning.

sentence Syntactic unit that includes at least one SUBJECT and one PREDICATE but may be composed of one or more INDEPENDENT CLAUSES, as well as SUBORDINATE OR DEPENDENT CLAUSES.

sentence adverb ADVERB that modifies a sentence or longer segment of DISCOURSE, rather than a specific verb; in “Hopefully, I’ll always use adverbs grammatically,” *hopefully* is a sentence adverb, and some consider it ungrammatical English usage; also called a DISCOURSE ADVERB.

sentence fragment SENTENCE ill-formed because it lacks either a SUBJECT or PREDICATE, or because it proposes a SUBORDINATE as an INDEPENDENT CLAUSE.

sibilant Speech sounds that “hiss” rather than “hum.” See also SONORANTS.

signified Concept that a SIGNIFIER represents; one essential component of a LINGUISTIC SIGN.

signifier Any meaningful string of sounds, that is, a linguistic form; one essential component of a LINGUISTIC SIGN.

silence Pause that allows someone else to take the CONVERSATIONAL FLOOR. See also EYE CONTACT, GESTURE, INTONATION, QUESTION, SILENCE, TURN, and TURN-TAKING VIOLATION.

social factor Process in which speakers enrich dialectal vocabulary by adopting (usually below the level of consciousness) features of speech marked for their social significance. See also BORROWING, COINING, LANGUAGE CONTACT, NATURALLY OCCURRING INTERNAL LANGUAGE CHANGE, RETENTION, and STRUCTURAL INFLUENCE.

social network theory Theory of SPEECH COMMUNITIES that focuses on the network of interpersonal relationships within such a community. See also COMMUNITY OF PRACTICE, LINGUISTIC MARKET, and VARIATIONIST SOCIOLINGUISTICS.

sociolinguistics Study of language in use, especially in terms of variation. See also DIALECTOLOGY and VARIATIONIST SOCIOLINGUISTICS.

soft palate Rear surface of the roof of the mouth, leading forward to the HARD PALATE and back toward the LARYNX; also called the VELUM. See also PALATE.

sonorant Any speech sound that includes “humming” or VOICING. See also OBSTRUENT and ORAL SOUND.

spatial deixis Reference to a location that figures directly in the circumstance in which an UTTERANCE is made, usually by means of an ADVERB. See also DEIXIS, PERSONAL DEIXIS, and TEMPORAL DEIXIS.

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specialization Process of semantic change in which a word with a general meaning becomes a word of more specific meaning; for instance, by the eighteenth century, *wit* meant, narrowly, ‘clever speech; faculty of clever speech; person with the faculty of clever speech,’ even though, in Old English, *wit* had referred to nearly any intellectual or mental ability. See also AMELIORATION, DYSPEMISM, EUPHEMISM, GENERALIZATION, HYPONYMY, MERONYMY, PEJORATION, POLYSEMY, and SYNONYMY.

spectrogram Image of a sound wave. See also ACOUSTIC PHONETICS and AUDITORY PHONETICS.

speech act theory Approach to language that conceives of language as performing actions; any instance of language that does so is called a **speech act**. See also CONSTATIVE SPEECH ACT, DIRECT SPEECH ACT, ILLOCUTIONARY ACT, INDIRECT SPEECH ACT, LOCUTIONARY ACT, PERFORMATIVE SPEECH ACT, PERLOCUTIONARY ACT, and PRAGMATICS.

speech community Group of speakers who share linguistic norms and ideologies. See also COMMUNITY OF PRACTICE, LINGUISTIC MARKET, and SOCIAL NETWORK THEORY.

Spoonerism Exchange of (usually initial) sounds in a series of two or more words, such as “Let me sew you to your sheet,” usually to humorous effect. See also ANTICIPATION, MALAPROPISM, and PRESERVATION.

Stand Alone Test CONSTITUENCY TEST in which a supposed CONSTITUENT, standing alone, adequately answers a question. See also COORDINATION TEST, MOVEMENT TEST, and SUBSTITUTION TEST.

stop Speech sound produced, in part, by complete obstruction of airflow. See also AFFRICATE, FRICATIVE, NASAL, and OBSTRUENT.

structural influence Phonology, morphology, or syntax of a language variety that is affected by a contact language. See also BORROWING, COINING, LANGUAGE CONTACT, NATURALLY OCCURRING INTERNAL LANGUAGE CHANGE, RETENTION, and SOCIAL FACTOR.

style 1: Use of supposedly “good” or “correct” English. 2: Specific type of speech, for instance, formal speech or colloquial speech, academic speech or gossip, etc.

style-shift Movement from one STYLE to another in any type of DISCOURSE. See also CODESWITCHING, CRITICAL DISCOURSE ANALYSIS, DISCOURSE ANALYSIS, and STYLISTICS.

stylistics Study of language as used in artificial contexts, such as literature, judicial and political speech, etc.; study of language as art or craft. See also CRITICAL DISCOURSE ANALYSIS and DISCOURSE ANALYSIS.

subject NOUN, noun phrase, or PRONOUN that acts through a VERB or is described in a PREDICATE; also the CASE in which such a word functions. See also DIRECT OBJECT, INDIRECT OBJECT, and OBJECT.

subjunctive mood MOOD that expresses types of conditional meaning, especially command, hypothesis, or wish.

subordinate clause CLAUSE that cannot function as a SENTENCE, but that must be attached to or embedded in an INDEPENDENT CLAUSE; also called a DEPENDENT CLAUSE.

subordinating conjunction CONJUNCTION, such as *although*, *because*, *if*, *unless*, that connects a MAIN CLAUSE and a DEPENDENT or SUBORDINATE CLAUSE.

substitution In NARRATIVE, partial replacement of ELLIPSIS to promote COHESION by connecting the points at which information is omitted and supplied.

Substitution Test CONSTITUENCY TEST in which one replaces the CONSTITUENT in question with a single word that should serve the same syntactic FUNCTION. See also COORDINATION TEST, MOVEMENT TEST, and STAND ALONE TEST.

suffix AFFIX attached to the end of a word, sometimes a DERIVATIONAL, sometimes an INFLECTIONAL MORPHEME.

suffixing 1: Word-formative process involving a SUFFIX. 2: Word resulting from that process.

superlative adjective Form of an ADJECTIVE indicating that one item possesses a quality to the greatest possible degree; for instance, grass can be *green*, but it is *greenest* in a baseball infield when you listen to a game on the radio and have to visualize that green field in the mind.

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superordinate Word of more general meaning than others defined in relation to it; for instance, *vehicle* is a superordinate for *car*, *bus*, *bicycle*, *motorcycle*, etc. Also called a HYPERNYM. See also HYPONYM.

suppletion Partial merger of two VERBS, so that some forms derive from one verb and some from the other, as with *go* (from Old English *gan*) and *went* (from Old English *wendan*).

surface dyslexia DYSLEXIA in which speakers have trouble reading words with irregular spellings. See also DEEP DYSLEXIA and PHONOLOGICAL DYSLEXIA.

syllabic consonant CONSONANT that participates in or constitutes the NUCLEUS of a SYLLABLE.

syllable Unit of speech consisting of uninterrupted sound, composed of one or more phonemes, which generally includes a vowel NUCLEUS and may include a consonant ONSET or CODA or both. See also PHONOTACTIC CONSTRAINT and SYLLABIC CONSONANT.

Sylvian fissure Division between the FRONTAL and TEMPORAL LOBES of the LEFT HEMISPHERE of the brain.

synchronic Concerned with the present state of affairs; language can be considered synchronically. See also DIACHRONIC.

synonym Word very close in meaning to another; word that shares a DENOTATIVE MEANING, but not CONNOTATIVE MEANING, with another; the lexical relationship among such terms is **synonymy**. See also GENERALIZATION, HYPONYMY, MERONYMY, and POLYSEMY.

syntax Systematic ways in which words combine to create well-formed PHRASES, CLAUSES, and SENTENCES.

synthetic language Language in which inflection, rather than word order, mostly indicates grammatical functions in a sentence. See also AGGLUTINATIVE LANGUAGE and ANALYTIC LANGUAGE.

tag question YES-NO QUESTION added to the end of a declarative SENTENCE that repeats the AUXILIARY VERB and PRONOUN (or introduces a pronoun for a NOUN or NOMINAL in the sentence) in inverse positions, such as “We have finally reached the end of this definition, haven’t we?”

temporal adverb ADVERB that describes when an action or state occurs, such as *now* or *soon*. See also DISCOURSE ADVERB, MANNER ADVERB, and SENTENCE ADVERB.

temporal deixis Reference to a time or period of time that figures directly in the circumstance in which an UTTERANCE is made, usually by means of an ADVERB. See also DEIXIS, PERSONAL DEIXIS, and SPATIAL DEIXIS.

temporal lobe Part of the brain toward the lower front of each cerebral hemisphere; the CORTEX at the temporal lobe of the LEFT HEMISPHERE contains centers important to speech production, including WERNICKE’S AREA. See also FRONTAL LOBE, OCCIPITAL LOBE, and PARIETAL LOBE.

tense GRAMMATICAL indication, in the form of a VERB or a verb phrase, of time at which an event or state occurs. See also ASPECT and MOOD.

tenseness DISTINCTIVE FEATURE of VOWELS indicating the relatively loose (central) or tense (peripheral) position of the tongue. Also called LAXNESS. See also BACKNESS, FRONTNESS, HEIGHT, LAX VOWEL, and TENSE VOWEL.

tone PITCH of a word that changes the meaning of the word. See also INTONATION.

trachea The “windpipe” through which air flows from the lungs to the LARYNX.

transformation Syntactic processes that generate “surface” realizations from “underlying” sentences, as in the passive transformation “The definition was written by Michael” generated from “Michael wrote the definition.”

transitive verb VERB that requires a DIRECT OBJECT; the essential property of such verbs is **transitivity**. See also DITRANSITIVE VERB, INTRANSITIVE VERB, and OBJECT-COMPLEMENT VERB.

tree Analytic tool used to expose the hierarchical structure of words, phrases, clauses, and sentences. See also BRANCH and NODE.

truth conditions What must be true for an UTTERANCE or SENTENCE to be true.

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turn Basic unit of conversation. See also CONVERSATIONAL FLOOR, EYE CONTACT, GESTURE, INTONATION, QUESTION, SILENCE, and TURN-TAKING VIOLATION.

turn-taking violation Attempt to take or reluctance to give up the CONVERSATIONAL FLOOR once a TURN is indicated, for instance by INTERRUPTION or OVERLAP.

uncountable nouns NOUNS that represent things or concepts that cannot be counted, such as *stuff* and *water*, sometimes called “mass nouns.”

Universal Grammar According to Noam Chomsky, who conceived it, the “system of principles, conditions, rules that are elements or properties of all human languages” (1975, 29).

utterance Realization of a given unit of speech on a specific occasion in a specific context; the basic unit of DISCOURSE.

variationist sociolinguistics Study of distributional patterns of linguistic variables within SPEECH COMMUNITIES. See also COMMUNITY OF PRACTICE, DIALECTOLOGY, LINGUISTIC MARKET, LINGUISTIC NETWORK THEORY, and SOCIOLINGUISTICS.

velum Rear surface of the roof of the mouth, leading forward to the HARD PALATE and back toward the LARYNX; also called the SOFT PALATE. See also PALATE.

verb Word that represents action, existence, relation, or state of being; also the LEXICAL CATEGORY to which such words belong.

verdictive ILLOCUTIONARY ACT that judges, assesses, or ranks. See also ASSERTIVE, COMMISSIVE, DECLARATION, DIRECTIVE, EXPRESSIVE, and REPRESENTATIVE.

vocal cords Elastic muscles that stretch over the LARYNX.

voicing DISTINCTIVE FEATURE that describes the extent to which the vocal cords are pulled back (“voiceless” or “unvoiced”) or vibrate (“voiced”). See also MANNER OF ARTICULATION and PLACE OF ARTICULATION.

vowel Speech sound characterized by unimpeded airflow and produced by shape of the oral cavity and the tongue’s shape and position. See also CONSONANT and DISTINCTIVE FEATURES.

Wernicke’s aphasia APHASIA caused by damage to WERNICKE’S AREA, because of which a speaker finds it difficult to understand speech. See also BROCA’S APHASIA.

Wernicke’s area Area in the CORTEX at the TEMPORAL LOBE of the LEFT HEMISPHERE of the brain partly responsible for language production. See also BROCA’S AREA.

wh- question Question formed by movement of PRONOUN beginning with *wh-* from the end of a question (“You moved which pronoun?”) to the front (“Which pronoun did you move?”) with reattribution of TENSE to the AUXILIARY.

yes-no question Question formed by rearrangement of CONSTITUENTS within a declarative sentence into a question that elicits either “Yes” or “No,” as when “This is a well-formed yes-no question” becomes “Is this a well-formed yes-no question?” The answer is “Yes.”

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