

MODULE 1 INTRODUCTION TO CONTEMPORARY ENGLISH USAGE

Unit 1	The Confines of Contemporary English
Unit 2	History of Contemporary English Usage
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UNIT 1 THE CONFINES OF CONTEMPORARY ENGLISH

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1.0 INTRODUCTION

In this unit, there is going to be an examination of the concept of contemporary English usage with particular interest in the differences compared with the old forms. There has been the controversy surrounding the differences between modern and contemporary English. What are the unique properties that make contemporary English have forms that mark it out as exhibiting different linguistic properties from the modern English forms? There have been the production of dictionaries of current English, modern English and contemporary English with quite unclear differences except the occurrence of new lexical forms and their usage which result from the open class sets of English usage. The question now remains: “should a language’s contemporary form be restricted to the revelation of just the new lexical forms and their usage or other aspects of language forms?” In this unit, therefore, we shall critically study through the overview, the confines of contemporary English by examining the differences between the old English form, the modern English form and contemporary English forms after which the rules of contemporary English shall be highlighted so that the clear difference in the forms will be made clear.

2.0 OBJECTIVES

At the end of this unit, you should be able to:

- differentiate between Old English and Modern English;
- see the differences between Modern and contemporary English;
- recognize the existence of contemporary English;
- define contemporary English Usage; and
- make use of contemporary English rules.

HOW TO STUDY THE UNIT

- a. Read this unit as diligently as possible.
- b. Find meaning of unfamiliar words in the unit using your dictionary.
- c. As you read, put major points down in a piece of paper or jotter.
- d. Do not go to the next section until you have fully understood the section you are reading now.
- e. Do all the Self-Assessment exercises in the unit as honestly as you can. In some areas where it is not feasible to provide answers

3.0 MAIN CONTENT

3.1 General Overview

Language is a system of arbitrary vocal symbols by means of which a group of people cooperate or interact. Language is used essentially for communication. It also means that Language is a human activity by its being vocal, and it is based on random choice. Language is a purely human and non-instinctive method of communicating ideas, emotions, and desires by means of a system of voluntarily produced symbols. This means that only humans use language; it must be learned and must also follow certain rules to make meaning. Language is arbitrary; it is vocal; it is conventional and has multiple structures. Language cannot be equated with communication. Communication can take place perfectly without language as we find in the paralinguistic features. This brings us to the functions of language. Language is used by different people in different ways. It can be for the purpose of Phatic communion, that is, a social regularity; ceremonial purposes; as an instrument of action to keep records; to convey orders and information; to influence people; to enable self-expression; and to embody or enable thought-process. Because language is universal, these functions are for every language.

Language is variable. It is clear in everyday language use. Two individuals of the same generation and locality, speaking precisely the same dialect and moving in the same social circles are never absolutely the same in their speaking habits. This brings us to the question of what language variety means? Variety of language refers to the different

purposes for which language is used and each variety having distinct features from the others. It also refers to the variation in a particular language. It explains the factors that can make two individuals speak slightly divergent dialects of the same language rather than identical language forms. Language variety is determined by the language in situation which in turn is the appropriateness of language to the context of use. Language, therefore, is not a single homogeneous phenomenon but rather, “a complex of many different varieties in use in all kind of situations all over the world” (Crystal and Davy, 3). All these varieties have much more in common that differentiates them.

English is the most widely spoken of the Western Germanic languages, both in number of native speakers and in geographical distribution. It is the official language of Great Britain and the native language of most of the British empires. Together with Irish Gaelic (which is only spoken in some of the westernmost regions of Ireland) it is also an official language in the Republic of Ireland. Outside the British Isles, English is the official language in two other European regions, namely Gibraltar (although most inhabitants have Spanish as their native language) and Malta (where the inhabitants speak Maltese among themselves). As a result of the rise of the British Empire, the English language spread to many other countries and it is now the dominant language of the USA, Australia, New Zealand, and of Canada (where it is co-official with French). English is also the official language (or widely used as a lingua franca) in many other former British territories, such as India, Singapore, Hong Kong, Nigeria, South Africa, Uganda, Kenya and Zambia. After the demise of the British Empire, English remained an important world language due to the rise of the USA as a new world power.

English has an extraordinarily rich vocabulary and willingness to absorb new words. The vocabulary of English is undoubtedly vast, but assigning a specific number to its size is more a matter of definition than of calculation. Unlike other languages, there is no Academy to define officially accepted words. Neologisms are coined regularly in medicine, science and technology and other fields, and new slang is constantly being developed. Some of these new words enter wide usage; others remain restricted to small circles. Foreign words used in immigrant communities often make their way into wider English usage. Archaic, dialectal, and regional words might or might not be widely considered as "English". The *Oxford English Dictionary*, 2nd edition (*OED2*) includes over 600,000 definitions, following a rather inclusive policy. It embraces not only the standard language of literature and conversation, whether current at the moment, or obsolete, or archaic, but also the main technical vocabulary, and a large measure of dialectal usage and slang. The editors of *Webster's Third New International Dictionary, Unabridged* (475,000 main headwords) in their preface, estimate the

number to be much higher. It is estimated that about 25,000 words are added to the language each year. Thus, with the regular growth of the English language as a result of the regular changes that occur in the language, it is developing consistently to accommodate the immediacy of its need to the users in various regions and times. This is the basic reason for the emergence of different forms of the language from the Old to the Contemporary.

SELF-ASSESSMENT EXERCISE 1

“The nature of language is the basic reason for the development of different forms of every language.” How does this relate to the emergence of Contemporary English?

3.2 Old English and Modern English: The Differences

Old English, the ancestor of Modern English, originated from the dialects that were spoken by the Germanic tribes from northwest Germany and Jutland that invaded Britain in the 5th century. The name *English* evolved from the name of one of these tribes, the Angles whose homeland was the angular (hence their name) coastal region of what is now the German state of Schleswig-Holstein. Another of these tribes was the Saxons; and Anglo-Saxons is the common name used for the Germanic tribes who conquered England. Eventually English replaced the Celtic languages that were dominant in Britain before these invasions, and they only survived in the most isolated areas.

Old English was actually a very different language from Modern English; it differs much more from its modern descendant than, for instance, Ancient Greek differs from Modern Greek. Nevertheless, much of the basic vocabulary of Old English is more or less recognizable for modern speakers of the language. Here are a few examples of Old English words that are similar to their modern counterparts (although sometimes their meanings have changed):

Old English	Modern English
wicu	week
cyning	king
scort	short
gærs	grass
eorþe	earth
deor	deer (orig. wild beast)
cniht	knight (orig. youth)

It is important to realize that the spelling of Old English differs considerably from the spelling of Modern English. For instance, in ‘cyning’ the letter ‘c’ is pronounced as /k/, the combination ‘sc’ in

‘scort’ (also spelled *sceort*) is pronounced as ‘sh’, and the ‘y’ sounds like the /u/ in French or the /ü/ in German (a vowel not found in Modern English). Furthermore, the examples above show that Old English uses the letters ‘æ’ and ‘þ’ that are not used in Modern English anymore. Together with a third letter (ð), they later disappeared from the English orthography. The letters ‘þ’ (called thorn) and ‘ð’ (called eth) were borrowed from the Germanic runic script to represent the two consonants that are spelled ‘th’ in Modern English. With regard to the runic script, it should be noted that it co-existed with the Latin alphabet in England for many centuries after the Anglo-Saxons adopted the Christian religion. Only after England was conquered by the Normans, who brought the French language to the country, did the runes finally give way to Latin letters.

In the 11th century, England was invaded again, this time by the Normans. The Normans were descendants from Scandinavians (Norman = "North-man") who had settled in the part of France that is now known as Normandy. Although their ancestors of course spoke Norse, they had already adopted the language and culture of their new homeland at that time. So, the Normans spoke French and their language would become the language of the ruling class in England for several centuries. It will be obvious that this French from 11th century Normandy differed from French as it is spoken today. Some borrowings from Old French that still exist in English are not used in Modern French anymore, such as ‘mortgage’ (Modern French ‘hypothèque’), and many others have changed more drastically in French than in English. An example is, for instance, the Old French ‘warderobe’ which became ‘wardrobe’ in Modern English but ‘garderobe’ in Modern French.

After the conquest of England, French became the language of the aristocracy and the higher clergy while the common people continued to speak Anglo-Saxon. But naturally Anglo-Saxon became heavily influenced by French in the centuries after the invasion; many thousands of French words were borrowed, and English lost even more of its inflectional character. Eventually the aristocracy became completely anglicized and English emerged again as the language of all the inhabitants of England. But although Modern English is basically still a Germanic language the French influence (and to a lesser extent the Scandinavian influence) has caused it to have a vocabulary that differs in many respects from that of its continental relatives. And due to this insular position, many Germanic words in English have become pronounced very differently from their cognates in the other Western Germanic.

A rather unfortunate heritage of the Norman invasion is the chaotic spelling of Modern English, which is partly due to the fact that it is actually a mixture of two very different systems, Anglo-Saxon and

French. And in some cases scholars made the situation even worse by introducing spellings like ‘island’ with an ‘s’ that has never been pronounced (this word originates from Old English ‘ieglanð’ and not from Old French ‘isle’, which indeed lost its ‘s’ and became ‘île’ in Modern French). Another example is the word ‘whore’ to which the learned men added a ‘w’, although this word (originally Scandinavian) has always started with an ‘h’ in pronunciation (cf. Icelandic ‘hóra’ and Dutch ‘hoer’). The English spelling does have one advantage, for instance, the word ‘national’ is easily recognized as a derivation of ‘nation’, even though the first vowel in ‘national’ is pronounced differently from the one in ‘nation’. This would be less obvious in a spelling that better reflects the pronunciation (e.g. ‘national’ and ‘naytion’).

SELF-ASSESSMENT EXERCISE 2

From your understanding of the diachronic review of Old and Modern English usage, explain the basic differences between them.

3.3 Modern English and Contemporary English: Any Difference?

Modern English is the form of the English language spoken since the Great Vowel Shift, completed in roughly 1550. Despite some differences in vocabulary, material from the early 17th century, such as the works of William Shakespeare and the King James Bible, is considered to be in Modern English, or more specifically, is referred to as Early Modern English. Most people who are fluent in the English of the early 21st century can read these books with little difficulty. Modern English has a large number of dialects spoken in diverse countries throughout the world. Most of these, however, are mutually intelligible. This includes *American English*, *Australian English*, *British English*, *Canadian English*, *Caribbean English*, *Hiberno-English*, *Indo-Pakistani English*, *New Zealand English*, *Philippine English*, *Singaporean English*, *South African English* and *Nigerian English* etc. These dialects may be met in different contexts; for example, some American actors in Hollywood or historical or mythic epics often employ British-derivative accents while many British, Australian, and non-native English-speaking international pop singers sing in an ‘industry neutral’ American accent to appeal to an international demographic.

According to recent statistics, there are over 900 million speakers of English as a first or second language as of 2003, a number dwarfed only by the Chinese language in terms of the number of speakers. However, Chinese has a smaller geographical range and is spoken primarily in mainland China and Taiwan and also by a sizable immigrant community in North America. In contrast, English is spoken in a vast number of

territories including the United Kingdom, Ireland, Canada, the United States of America, Australia, New Zealand, India, Pakistan, and Africa. Its large number of speakers, plus its worldwide presence, has made English a common language for use in such diverse applications as controlling airplanes, developing software, conducting international diplomacy, and business relations.

Modern English began in England during the Elizabethan era which is also around the time of the great poet, William Shakespeare. English was imposed in regions around the world such as the United States, India, and Australia through colonization by the British Empire. As Great Britain began colonizing North America, Asia, and Africa, the English language and other customs and ideas spread around the world. This is considered an aspect of the Columbian Exchange. Early Modern English lacked uniformity in spelling, but Samuel Johnson's dictionary, published in 1755 in England, was influential in establishing a standard form of spelling. Noah Webster did the same in America, publishing his dictionary in 1828. Public education increased literacy, and more people had access to books (and therefore to a standard language) with the spread of public libraries in the 19th century. Many words entered English from other languages as a result of contact with other cultures through trade and settlement and from the migration of large numbers of people to the United States from other countries. World War I and World War II threw together people from different backgrounds, and the greater social mobility afterwards helped to lessen the differences between social accents, at least in the UK. The development of radio broadcasting in the early 20th century familiarized the population with accents and vocabulary from outside their own localities, often for the first time, and this phenomenon continued with film and television.

Contemporary English is the current English usage which is in line with the immediate communication requirements of the users. It surely cannot be the language of TV soap operas or TV Newscasts or popular speeches of politicians seeking office. Nor is it likely to be the language used by scientists to convey information one to another in learned articles or to the world in a semi-popular idiom. This is an odd form of modern language because it has features which are not found in modern forms of English spoken on the streets, on radio and TV. In the compilation of the Contemporary English Bible, the following were adhered to:

- i. Ceasing to use the second person singular forms of pronouns and verbs, using "You/Your" instead of "Thee/Thou/Thine."
- ii. The avoidance of all words and phrases deemed to be archaic, such as "vouchsafe" and "beseech". No archaisms, please.

- iii. The rejection of the ordinary (historical) form of the collect, which employs a relative clause following a pronoun, and the replacing of this relative clause with a declarative clause. So, for example, instead of “Almighty God, unto whom all hearts are open...” we get, “Almighty God, to you all hearts are open.” It seems as though the worshippers are now telling God what he ought to know instead of remembering in his presence what he has told them!
- iv. The cutting down to a minimum the use of adjectives and adverbs. It seems to be that nouns and verbs are all that are basically required to convey meaning. So we do not need to say “precious death” and “mighty resurrection” and “glorious ascension.”
- v. The simplifying of grammar and syntax. We must note that modern grammatical structures are simplified for clarity.
- vi. There have been increasingly marked attempts to minimize the use of names and to bring in models, metaphors and names that are deemed to be either neutral or feminine in grammatical gender.

It will be noted that points (i) and (ii) concern changes in grammar and vocabulary, (iii) and (v) concern simplifications in sentence structure and syntax, (iv) and (vi) concern simplification (actually diminution) in vocabulary. It would seem that "Contemporary English" is an *ad hoc* description, rather than a coherent concept. However, rather like the difference between ‘pressboard’ and ‘wood’, or ‘patent leather’ and ‘real leather’, contemporary English seems artificial, rather than being the natural mode of discourse. So the “contemporary” defines itself not by comparison with the rest of the contemporary but as selective rejection of the traditional.

Modern English began the attack on archaisms while contemporary English finished the war. The fact is that contemporary English is beyond archaism (even though there are still relics of archaisms in the usage) as it encompasses new forms, old forms and consistent borrowings in lexical and syntactic forms from other languages. This makes Contemporary English a kind of parody of the traditional, with the intention to bring ‘newness’ into the language in line with the current sociolinguistic requirements of the users.

SELF-ASSESSMENT EXERCISE 3

Critically assess the statement that “Contemporary English is a newer version of Modern English in current use”

3.4 Rules/Reasons for Contemporary English

The causes of language change are enormous. English language has undergone several changes in the course of history. Contemporary English usage is a result of the changes which cumulated with time as a mode of using English for communication in the present dispensation. Some of the rules and/or reasons for the evolvement of this type of English usage include:

1. *Articulatory Simplification*

To make articulation of words more and more simple, People leave certain complicated consonant clusters. People want articulatory simplification so they avoid complex clusters. This is the reason for changes in pronunciation. The simplification of sounds basically states that certain sounds are easier to pronounce than others, so the natural tendency of the speakers is to prefer the hard-to-say sounds to easier ones. An example of this would be the proto-Romance word /camera/ "room" changing into early French /camra/. It is hard to say /m/ and /r/ one after another, so it was "simplified" by adding /b/ in between, to /cambra/. A more recent example is the English word "nuclear", which many people pronounce as "nucular".

2. *Natural Process*

Neo-grammarians state that changes are automatic and mechanical, and therefore cannot be observed or controlled by the speakers of the language. They found that what to a human ear is a single "sound" is actually a collection of very similar sounds. They call it "low-level deviation" from an "idealized form". They argue that language change is simply a slow shift of the "idealized form" by small deviations.

3. *Immigration of Speakers*

The case of children incorrectly learning the language of their parents does not happen often. Children of immigrants almost always learn the language of their friends at school regardless of the parents' dialect or original language. Children of British immigrants in the United States nearly always speak with one of the many regional American accents. So in this case, the parents' linguistic contribution becomes less important than the social group to which the child belongs.

4. *Social and Cultural Identity*

At the beginning, a small part of a population pronounces certain words that have, for example, the same vowel, differently from the rest of the population. This occurs naturally since humans do not all reproduce

exactly the same sounds. However, at some later point in time, for some reason this difference in pronunciation starts to become a signal for social and cultural identity. Others of the population who wish to be identified with the group either consciously or unknowingly adopt this difference, exaggerate it, or apply it to change the pronunciation of other words. If given enough time, the change ends up affecting all words that possess the same vowel, and so that this becomes a regular linguistic sound change.

We can argue that similar phenomena apply to the grammar and to the lexicon of languages. An interesting example is that of computer-related words creeping into standard American language, like "bug", "crash", "net", "email", etc. This would conform to the theory in that these words originally were used by a small group (i.e. computer scientists), but with the boom in the Internet, everybody wants to become technology-savvy. And so these computer science words start to filter into the mainstream language. We are currently at the exaggeration phase, where people are coining weird terms like "cyberpad", "cyberspace" and "dotcom" which never exist before in computer science.

6. *Changes in Languages*

There are several changes which occur in every language as a result of historical and linguistic reasons. Some of them are:

- a) *Phonological Changes:* There have been many phonological changes between Old English and Modern English as the rules governing flapped and glottal stop variants of /t/ have been added to American English. An important set of extensive sound changes affecting the long (tense) vowels occurred at the end of the Middle English period.
- b) *Lexical Changes:* From old English times to the present, new words have continuously been added to the English language as English has borrowed a lot of words from French language such as, text, prince, judge, prayer, religion, army, navy, enemy, fashion, etc. In this way, the vocabulary of the language has also somewhat changed.
- c) *Changes in Morphology:* Language changes have occurred in shape of words as suffixes are borrowed from French to make new words. People assume that a word has a morphological composition that it did not originally have (root + affix, usually) and remove that affix, creating a new word: back formation. The assumed model was the class of regular plural nouns ending in -s. Another model is agent nouns in -er, -er usually added to verbs to form an agent noun and sometimes removed from nouns to

form new verbs as *letch* from *lecher*. Historically the inflections had caused mutation of the vowel before them (o to e from old to eldest)

- d) *Changes in Pronunciation:* Linguistic change occurs over time; for example, the differences in spelling and pronunciation between Middle English *niht* and Modern English *night* represent linguistic changes that developed between (roughly) the fourteenth and the sixteenth or seventeenth centuries.
- e) *Semantic Changes:* In old English, one word is used for only one specific thing but now we use one word for many things. In the past, the word “aunt” is used for maternal aunt only but now it is for any aged relative. When one word changes from limited to expanding use it is called *semantics broadness*. When the meaning of a word becomes less general then it is called *semantics narrowness* as we use word *hound* for only *hunting dog* but in past it was used for every *dog*.
- f) *Syntactic Changes:* These include rule addition. A syntactic rule that has been added to English since the Old English period is the particle Movement .as the sentence pairs of the type *John threw out the fish* and *John threw out* did not occur in Old English. A syntactic rule that has been lost from English is the morpho-syntactic rule of Adjective Agreement. At one time adjectives required endings that had to agree with the head noun in case, number, and gender. This rule is no longer found in English, since most of the inflectional endings of English have been lost.
- g) *Changes of Verbs:* Contemporary English makes a distinction between auxiliary verbs and main verbs, a distinction reflected in questions (only auxiliary verb fronted in question, as in “can you leave?”), negative sentences (only auxiliary verb can take the contracted negative ‘n’t’, as in ‘you can't leave’ and tag questions (only auxiliary verb can appear in tag, as in "you can leave, can't you?). Focusing now only on so-called modal verbs (*can, must*), it is interesting to note that prior to the sixteenth century these syntactic distinctions between main verb and auxiliary did not exist. At that time it was possible for main verb to take ‘not’, and examples such as “I deny it not” (instead of “I don't deny it”) and “Forbid him not” (instead of “Don't forbid him”) can be found in Shakespeare’s writing.

The changes that took place between Old English and Modern English and between Modern English and contemporary English are typical of the kinds of changes that all human languages undergo over time, and after enough years have passed the latest language can be very different from its ancestor language. Moreover, language change offers important

indirect evidence about the nature of human language namely, that it is rule-governed. We see that major language changes occurred in English language during Old English and Middle English period are best viewed as in the sets of rules characterizing. Afterwards one can choose, not simply accept, the phrases that will best cover the meaning, and then switch round and decide what impressions one's words are likely to make on another person. This last effort of the mind cuts out all mixed images, all prefabricated phrases, needless repetitions, and humbug and vagueness generally. But one can often be in doubt about the effect of a word or a phrase, and one need rules that one can rely on when instinct fails. If you simplify your English, you are freed from the worst follies of orthodoxy.

SELF-ASSESSMENT EXERCISE 4

Explain the various factors responsible for the evolution of contemporary English with ample examples

4.0 CONCLUSION

English usage today is an area of discourse - sometimes it seems more like dispute - about the way words are used and ought to be used. This discourse makes up the subject matter of a large number of books that puts the word *usage* in their titles. Behind *usage* as a subject lies a collection of opinions about what English grammar is or should be, about the propriety of using certain words and phrases, and about the social status of those who use certain words and constructions. A fairly large number of these opinions have been with us long enough to be regarded as rules or at least to be referred to as rules. In fact, they are often regarded as rules of grammar, even if they concern only matters of social status or vocabulary selection. Many linguists believe that Contemporary English has nothing to do with archaism, with the salvaging of obsolete words and turns of speech, or with the setting-up of a "Standard-English" which must never be departed from while others believe on the contrary, that it is concerned with the scrapping of every word or idiom which has outworn its usefulness. The plain truth is that it has nothing to do with correct grammar and syntax, which are of no importance so long as one makes one's meaning clear, or with the avoidance of Americanisms and other clichés or with having what is called a "good style."

5.0 SUMMARY

It is clear that English, like every other language, is dynamic as it responds regularly to changes. Diachronically, it has often responded to the immediacy of its need among its users in time and place. Beginning from the Old English period through to the Modern English usage,

English language has often exhibited the large position of absorbing changes and complying with the immediacy of its usage. It is clear in this unit to understand that the Old and Modern English forms are different in structure and syntax as can be seen in the language of Old English writers as compared with those of the modern writers. There are marked lexical and syntactic differences between the Old and the Modern English forms. The modern English, on the other hand, has slight differences with the Contemporary English even though both types seem to use almost the same lexical forms as can be seen in dictionaries of modern English and those of contemporary English. One seems to notice the increment in words in Contemporary English because of the increasing technological factors which encourage the formation of new words to accommodate the invention in the mainstream of the language. Just like every other form of the English language, Contemporary English is a response to certain linguistic changes which English, like every other language has to undergo in order to remain relevant to its users in communicating ideas within the immediacy of its application in sociolinguistic situations.

6.0 TUTOR-MARKED ASSIGNMENT

Answer the following questions carefully from your understanding of this unit:

- i. Define ‘Contemporary English’, in the light of its emergence.
- ii. Explain the marked differences between the Old and Modern English forms.
- iii. “Modern English and contemporary English are different yet related”. Discuss the relationship and the differences.
- iv. “Contemporary English is more concerned with increased vocabulary”. Defend this statement.
- v. “Language change results in language forms”. Discuss the various linguistic changes which might result in the new form of a given language.

7.0 REFERENCES/FURTHER READING

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UNIT 2 HISTORY OF CONTEMPORARY ENGLISH USAGE

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1.0 INTRODUCTION

In this unit, we will study the historical development of contemporary English usage. This study shall take us through a historical exploration of the development of English language philology, grammar, semantics and phonology. We explore the changes and the various developmental patterns of usage which resulted in much of the new grammaticality of contemporary English. Each of these changes shall be treated with detailed scrutiny in order to present in depth the properties that make up the changes.

2.0 OBJECTIVES

At the end of this unit, you should be able to:

- identify the various changes in the history of standard English;
- apply the changes in their use of contemporary English;
- recognize the new grammaticality resulting in the changes;
- accept that like other languages, English language is dynamic; and
- distinguish the various changes whenever they occur in usage.

HOW TO STUDY THE UNIT

- a. Read this unit as diligently as possible.
- b. Find meaning of unfamiliar words in the unit using your dictionary.
- c. As you read, put major points down in a piece of paper or jotter.
- d. Do not go to the next section until you have fully understood the section you are reading now.

- e. Do all the Self-Assessment exercises in the unit as honestly as you can. In some areas where it is not feasible to provide answers

3.0 MAIN CONTENT

3.1 General Overview

The history of the English language really started with the arrival of three Germanic tribes who invaded Britain during the 5th century AD. These tribes, *the Angles, the Saxons and the Jutes*, crossed the North Sea from what today is Denmark and northern Germany. At that time the inhabitants of Britain spoke a Celtic language. But most of the Celtic speakers were pushed west and north by the invaders, mainly into what is now Wales, Scotland and Ireland. The Angles came from *Englaland* and their language was called *Englisc*, from which the words *England* and *English* are derived. English is a West Germanic language originating in England, and the first language for most people in Australia, Canada, the Commonwealth Caribbean, Ireland, New Zealand, the United Kingdom and the United States of America (also commonly known as the Anglosphere). It is used extensively as a second language and as an official language throughout the world, especially in Commonwealth countries such as Sri Lanka, India, Pakistan and South Africa, and in many international organisations. Modern English is sometimes described as the global lingua franca. English is the dominant international language in communication, science, business, aviation, entertainment, radio and diplomacy. English is one of six official languages of the United Nations.

The English vocabulary has changed considerably over the centuries. Germanic words (generally words of German, or to a lesser extent, Scandinavian origin) which include all the basics such as pronouns (*I, my, you, it*) and conjunctions (*and, or, but*) tend to be shorter than the Latinate words of English, and more common in ordinary speech. The longer Latinate words are often regarded as more elegant or educated. However, the excessive or superfluous use of Latinate words is, at times, considered by some to be either pretentious (as in the stereotypical policeman's talk of "apprehending the suspect") or an attempt to obfuscate an issue. George Orwell's essay "Politics and the English Language" criticises this style of writing, among other perceived misuses of the language. An English speaker is in many cases able to choose between Germanic and Latinate synonyms: *come* or *arrive*; *sight* or *vision*; *freedom* or *liberty*. In some cases there is a choice between a Germanic word (*oversee*), a Latin word (*supervise*), and a French word derived from the same Latin word (*survey*). The richness of the language arises from the variety of different meanings and nuances such synonyms harbour, enabling the speaker to express fine variations or shades of thought. Familiarity with the etymology of groups of

synonyms can give English speakers greater control over their linguistic register.

An exception to this and a peculiarity perhaps unique to English is that the nouns for *meats* are commonly different from, and unrelated to, those for the animals from which they are produced, the animal commonly having a Germanic name and the meat having a French-derived one. Examples include: *deer* and *venison*; *cow* and *beef*; or *swine/pig* and *pork*. This is assumed to be a result of the aftermath of the Norman invasion, where French-speaking elite were the consumers of the meat, produced by English-speaking lower classes. English is noted for the vast size of its active vocabulary and its fluidity. English easily accepts technical terms into common usage and imports new words and phrases that often come into common usage. Examples of this phenomenon include: *cookie*, *Internet* and *URL* (technical terms), as well as *genre*, *über*, *lingua franca* and *amigo* (imported words/phrases from French, German, modern Latin, and Spanish, respectively). In addition, slang often provides new meanings for old words and phrases. In fact, this fluidity is so pronounced that a distinction often needs to be made between formal forms of English and contemporary usage.

SELF-ASSESSMENT EXERCISE 1

Trace the historical development of English Language in England.

3.2 Lexical History/Changes

The historical development of words in English has been steady. On the American side of the Atlantic, the puristic strictures of Edward S. Gould, originally newspaper and magazine contributions were collected as *Good English* in 1867. He acknowledged the justness of Moon's criticisms and then appended a few parting shots at Moon's English, before tacking on an assault on the spelling reforms of Noah Webster and a series of lectures on pulpit oratory. Moon replied with *The Bad English of Lindley Murray and Other Writers on the English Language*, 1868, listed by H. L. Mencken as being in its eighth edition in 1882, under the title *Bad English Exposed*. Language controversy sold books in America as well as in England. The most popular of American 19th-century commentators was Richard Grant White, whose book *Words and Their Uses* (1870) was also compiled from previously published articles. His chapters on "misused words" and "words that are not words" hit many of the same targets as Gould's chapters on "misused words" and "spurious words," but White's chapters are longer.

Hall produced a whole book, *Recent Exemplifications of False Philology* (1872), exposing White's errors, and returned to the attack again with *Modern English* in 1873. Hall belonged to a new breed of commentator,

bringing a wealth of illustrative material from his collection of examples to bear on the various points of contention. Hall's evidence should have been more than enough to overwhelm White's unsupported assertions, but it was not. Hall's collection of examples became part of the foundations of the *Oxford English Dictionary*. Sir Ernest Gowers came into usage commentary from a different direction: he was asked to prepare a book for British civil servants to help them avoid the usual bureaucratic jargon of British official prose. The result was *Plain Words*, 1941. This slender book has gone through several editions, growing a bit each time. In 1965 a new edition of Fowler appeared, edited by Gowers, to which Gowers added a number of his own favourite topics. In addition to Fowler and Gowers, the work of Eric Partridge, particularly *Usage and Abusage*, 1942, has been influential. In recent years, while some English books about usage have concerned themselves with traditional questions of propriety, others have taken a different path, explaining the peculiarities of English idiom to learners of English.

Looking back from the late 1980s, we find that the 1920s and 1930s were a time of considerable interest in the examination and testing of attitudes and beliefs about usage and in a rationalization of the matter and methods of school grammar. Various publications written by Charles C. Fries and Robert C. Pooley, for example, seemed to point the way. They had relatively little influence in the following decades, however; the schoolbooks by and large follow the traditional lines, and the popular books of usage treat the traditional subjects. A notable exception is Bergen and Cornelia Evans's *A Dictionary of Contemporary American Usage* (1957). The book takes the traditional view of many specific issues, but it is strong in insisting that actual usage, both historical and contemporary, must be weighed carefully in reaching usage opinions.

Articles in scholarly books and journals (like *American Speech*) evince continuing interest in real language and real usage in spite of a strong tendency in modern linguistics toward the study of language in more abstract ways. If the popular idea of usage is represented by the continuing series of books produced by the journalists Philip Howard (in England) and William Safire (in the United States) and by the continuing publication of traditionally oriented handbooks, there is also some countervailing critical opinion as shown by such books as Dwight Bolinger's *Language: the Loaded Weapon*, Jim Quinn's *American Tongue and Cheek*, Dennis Baron's *Grammar and Good Taste*, and Harvey Daniels's *Famous Last Words*, all published in the early 1980s.

SELF-ASSESSMENT EXERCISE 2

Explain the major thrust of controversy in the lexicological development of English in Britain and America.

3.3 Grammatical History/Changes

Grammatical changes have also been steady in English. Ben Jonson's book on English grammar appeared posthumously in 1640. It is short and sketchy and is intended for the use of foreigners. Its grammar is descriptive, but Jonson hung his observations on a Latin grammatical framework. It also seems to be the first English grammar book to quote the Roman rhetorician Quintilian's dictum "Custom is the most certain mistress of language." John Wallis, a mathematician and member of the Royal Society, published in 1658 a grammar, written in Latin, for the use of foreigners who wanted to learn English. Wallis, according to George H. McKnight, abandoned much of the method of Latin grammar. Wallis's grammar is perhaps best remembered for being the source of the much discussed distinction between *shall* and *will*. Wallis's grammar is also the one referred to by Samuel Johnson in the front matter of his 1755 dictionary.

We need mention only a few of these productions here. Pride of place must go to Bishop Robert Lowth's *A Short Introduction to English Grammar* (1762). Lowth's book is both brief and logical. Lowth was influenced by the theories of James Harris's *Hermes* (1751), a curious disquisition about universal grammar. Lowth apparently derived his notions about the perfectibility of English grammar from Harris, and he did not doubt that he could reduce the language to a system of uniform rules. Lowth's approach was strictly prescriptive: he meant to improve and correct, not describe. Lowth's grammar was not written for children. But he did what he intended to so well that subsequent grammarians fairly fell over themselves in haste to get out versions of Lowth suitable for school use, and most subsequent grammars- including Noah Webster's first- were to some extent based upon Lowth's.

The 19th century is so rich in usage lore that it is hard to summarize. We find something new in the entrance of journalists into the usage field. Reviews had commented on grammatical matters throughout the 18th century, it is true, but in the 19th century, newspapers and magazines with wider popular appeal began to produce good works. One result of this activity was the usage book that consists of pieces first written for a newspaper or magazine and then collected into a book along with selected comments and suggestions by readers (this type of book is still common today). Perhaps the first of these was *A Plea for the Queen's English* (1864) by Henry Alford, dean of Canterbury. Alford was vigorously attacked by George Washington Moon, a writer born in

London of American parents, in a work that eventually became entitled *The Dean's English*. The controversy fuelled several editions of both books and seems to have entertained readers on both sides of the Atlantic.

The different approaches of the British and Americans to usage questions have continued along the lines evident in the last half of the 19th century. Fewer books devoted to usage issues have been produced in England, and the arena there has been dominated by two names: Fowler and Gowers. H. W. Fowler's best-known work is *Modern English Usage*, 1926, an expanded, updated and alphabetized version of *The King's English*, which he had produced with one of his brothers in 1906. This book gained ready acceptance as an authority, and it is usually treated with considerable deference on both sides of the Atlantic.

SELF-ASSESSMENT EXERCISE 3

In the development of English grammar, the battle has been between prescriptions and rules. Discuss adequately.

3.4 Phonological History/Changes

When someone communicates with us by means of language, he normally does so by causing us to hear a stream of sounds. We hear the sounds not as indefinitely variable in acoustic quality (however much they may be so in actual *physical* fact). Rather, we hear them as each corresponding to one of a very small set (in English, /p/, /l/, /n/, /i/, /ð/, /s/...) which can combine in certain ways and not others. For example, in English we have /sink/ but not *ksin. Similarly, there are observed historical changes in the patterns of stress and pitch in English. The sounds made in a particular language and the rules for their organization are studied in the branch of linguistics known as phonology, while their physical properties and their manner of articulation are studied in phonetics.

Pronunciation is a special case for several reasons. In the first place, it is the type of linguistic organization which distinguishes one national standard from another most immediately and completely and which traces the historical development of forms. Secondly, it is the least institutionalized aspect of Standard English, in the sense that, provided our grammar and lexical items conform to the appropriate national standard, it matters less that our pronunciation follows closely our individual regional pattern. This is doubtless because pronunciation is essentially gradient, a matter of 'more or less' rather than the discrete 'this or that' features of grammar and lexicon. Thirdly, norms of pronunciation are subject less to educational and national constraints

than to social ones: this means, in effect, that some regional accents are less acceptable for 'network use' than others.

In BrE, one type of pronunciation comes close to enjoying the status of 'standard' reformation in history: it is the accent associated with the English public schools, called 'Received Pronunciation' or 'RP'. Because this has traditionally been transmitted through the educational system based upon observed changes, it is importantly non-regional, and this - together with the obvious prestige that the social importance of its speakers has conferred on it - has been one of its strengths as a lingua franca over the years in several varieties and regions. But RP no longer has the unique authority it had in the first half of the twentieth century. It is now only one of the accents commonly used on the BBC and takes its place along with others which carry the unmistakable mark of regional origin - not least, an Australian or North American or Caribbean origin.

There were remarkable phonological changes in English history. Human language is creative and flexible. It changes with the passage of time. Languages undergo changes. Slowly, to be sure, but they do change. English is measured in three "cataclysmic" changes that generally coincide with historical events that had a profound effect on the language. Around 1500, there was *a great vowel shift*, which brought the language into Modern English, which is where it is today. Based on this measure (approximately 500 years per shift), we may expect major changes in the language today. The Great Vowel Shift in English changed the seven long (tense) vowels of Middle English and moved them "up" on the tongue. Fromkin and Rodman posit that the Great Vowel Shift is responsible for many of the spelling "inconsistencies" today. Language change, however, is a highly regular process.

SELF-ASSESSMENT EXERCISE 4

Comment on the effect of the Great Vowel Change in contemporary English. Make adequate research to back up your comment.

4.0 CONCLUSION

Changes are constant features of every language. Changes in English language keep occurring by the minutes as the users interact, observe and adopt 'newness' in the language. To understand how opinions and rules developed in English, we have to go back in history at least as far back as the year 1417 when the official correspondence of Henry V suddenly and almost entirely stopped being written in French and started being written in English. By mid-century many government documents and even private letters were in English and before 1500 even statutes were being recorded in the mother tongue. This restoration of English as

the official language of the royal bureaucracy was one very important influence on the gradual emergence of a single standard dialect of English out of the many varied regional dialects that already existed. English now had to serve the functions formerly served by Latin and French, languages which had already assumed standard forms and this new reality was a powerful spur to the formation of a standard in writing English that could be quite independent of variable speech. The process was certainly not completed within the 15th century but increasingly the written form of the language that modern scholars call Chancery English had its effect in combination with other influences such as the newfangled process of printing from movable type. There was no special interest in language as such at that time. There were those who had their doubts about its suitability. Still the desire to use the vernacular rather than Latin was strong and some of the doubters sought to put flesh on the bare bones of English by importing words from Latin, Italian, and French- the European languages of learned and graceful discourse.

5.0 SUMMARY

The first appearance of English, as such, was when the Saxons invaded Britain. This form of English is called Old English and dates from approximately 449 to 1066, when the Normans conquered England, beginning the period of Middle English. It was during this period (1066-1500) that many of the Latinate words and spellings used in English today were introduced into the language. When we study language changes historically it is called *historical linguistics*. Any of the linguistic rules identified in Linguistics Assumptions and Principles may be changed: phonemes may be changed, added or removed, morphological rules may be added, changed, or lost, and even syntactical rules might be modified. Semantic rules and the lexicon change much more rapidly than the other three. Lexical changes (the addition, modification, or removal of words from the general lexicon) are perhaps the quickest changes in language. The semantic changes of words may broaden, narrow, or even shift in the meaning of such words. The historical changes observed in this unit have helped in several ways in the identification and development of Contemporary English usage.

6.0 TUTOR-MARKED ASSIGNMENT

Answer the following questions carefully:

- i. Identify the basic lexicological development of English language in history
- ii. “Historical changes affect language stability” Comment on this assumption
- iii. One clearly marked phonological change is the ‘Great Vowel Change’. What does that mean?

- iv. “Language changes are shrouded in controversy among scholars”. Explain this assumption based on your understanding of this unit

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UNIT 3 CATEGORIZATION OF ENGLISH IN USAGE/PEDAGOGY

CONTENTS

- 1.0 Introduction
- 2.0 Objectives
- 3. Main Content
 - 3.1 General Overview
 - 3.2 English as Native Language
 - 3.3 English as Second Language
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 - 3.5 English as Lingua Franca
- 4.0 Conclusion
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1.0 INTRODUCTION

In this unit, we shall study the various terminological categorizations of English language teaching and learning. These categorizations have guided teachers in teaching English language and have also helped students in the learning of the appropriate English for each vocation. English as an international language has been relevant in the conduct of world affairs: business, Internet, communication, administration etc and countries with English as second language have been investing much in the teaching of the language so that the younger generations will not lag behind in world affairs. A country like China with the largest population on earth is investing in English because half of the countries in the world are now English language conscious. We shall study this categorization, also called varieties by Quirk et al. (1979), and relate them to contemporary English usage.

2.0 OBJECTIVES

- understand the reasons for categorization of English language teaching and learning;
- recognize the various limits in each categorization;
- use the relevant variety for each situation;
- appreciate the essence of these categorizations; and
- distinguish the limits of each variety.

HOW TO STUDY THE UNIT

- a. Read this unit as diligently as possible.
- b. Find meaning of unfamiliar words in the unit using your dictionary.

- c. As you read, put major points down in a piece of paper or jotter.
- d. Do not go to the next section until you have fully understood the section you are reading now.
- e. Do all the Self-Assessment exercises in the unit as honestly as you can. In some areas where it is not feasible to provide answers

3.0 MAIN CONTENT

3.1 General Overview

In the pedagogy of English in contemporary times, we have such terms as ESL (English as a Second Language), ESOL (English for Speakers of Other Languages) and EFL (English as a Foreign Language) all referring to the use or study of English by speakers with a different native language. The precise usage includes the different use of the terms ESL and ESOL in different countries. These terms are most commonly used in relation to teaching and learning of English, but they may also be used in relation to demographic information. ELT (English Language Teaching) is a widely-used teacher-centred term, as in the English language teaching divisions of large publishing houses, ELT training, etc. The abbreviations TESL (Teaching English as a Second Language), TESOL (Teaching English for Speakers of Other Languages) and TEFL (Teaching English as a Foreign Language) are all also used. Other terms used in this field include EAL (English as an Additional Language), ESD (English as a Second Dialect), EIL (English as an International Language), ELF (English as a Lingua Franca), ESP (English for Special Purposes, or English for Specific Purposes), and EAP (English for Academic Purposes). Some terms that refer to those who are learning English are ELL (English Language Learner) and LEP (Limited English Proficiency).

In a situation where two or more languages and cultures are in contact, there is bound to be linguistic and cultural interference. Of the 4000 to 5000 living languages, English is by far the most widely used. As a mother tongue, it ranks second to Chinese. It is also important to state that about three hundred million speakers of English are to be found in every continent of the world. Again, over two hundred and fifty million people use the language as a second language, and one-sixth of the world's population use it to make and announce decisions affecting life and welfare. Therefore, barriers of race, color and creed do not hinder the spread of the use of English.

Actually, English can no longer be claimed as a sole property of a group of people. Native speakers of the language can no longer make strong proprietary claims to it. They now share the famous language with most other peoples of the world. The popularity of the language in Africa can, in part, be traced to the fact that due to colonial imposition, it was the

language of social mobility in the new order, and therefore the language most studied and used formally. In the unequal encounter, most African languages were neglected in terms of formal study and use, so that displacement replaced what should have been mutual translation between English and African languages. This is why the invention and development in African languages of concepts and terms in modern sciences and technology are at such a low level. English is, therefore, often the mostly used linguistic tool for intra/inter societal communication in the African continent. In Nigeria, for instance, with a multilingual linguistic complexity, English is more than simply a means of communicating ideas and information; it also serves a very important means of establishing and maintaining unifying relationship with people of diverse cultures and mother tongues.

SELF-ASSESSMENT EXERCISE 1

Explain the basic reasons for the categorizations of English language pedagogy.

3.2 English as Native Language (ENL)

In a more strict sense, English as Native language is restricted to English or British English (BrE) since English is the only language being spoken in the country. In this sense, English is the first and only language of the speakers. In Britain, English is the first and the only language of the people. Historically, English which was part of the Germanic tribes became the national language of British as a result of colonialism. The original language of the Britons is no longer being spoken. Thus, English is the only language of the people in a native sense. In most English language teaching abroad emphasis is usually on the native speakers as the most qualified for the job. Most factors resulting in the emergence of various varieties of English are results of the first language effect. Therefore, to be able to teach the language effectively, one has to be the native speaker with the assumed perfection in the spoken, written and behavioural expectations of a native. It is possible to be a native speaker of English without being a Briton if the person's sole language has been English irrespective of the linguistic background of the environment of the speaker. However, this last assumption has often been a matter of debate among linguists and sociolinguists in particular.

SELF-ASSESSMENT EXERCISE 2

From your understanding of the concept of ENL, is it possible to be a non-Briton and still be a native speaker of English?

3.3 English as a Second Language

ESL is another broad grouping in the use of English within the Anglosphere. In what Kachru calls "the inner circle", that is, countries such as the United Kingdom and the United States, this use of English is generally by refugees, immigrants and their children. It also includes the use of English in "outer circle" countries, often former British colonies, where English is an official language even if it is not spoken as a mother tongue by the majority of the population. This second-language function is more noteworthy, however, in a long list of countries where only a small proportion of the people have English as their second language: India, Pakistan, Nigeria, Kenya and many other Commonwealth countries and former British territories. Thus, a quarter of a century after independence, India maintains English as the medium of instruction in their schools. English is the second language in countries of such divergent backgrounds as the Philippines and Ethiopia, while in numerous other countries (like Thailand, South Korea and some Middle Eastern countries, for example) it has a second language status in respect of higher education. It is one of the two 'working' languages of the United Nations and of the two it is by far the more frequently used both in debate and in general conduct of UN business.

In the US, Canada and Australia, this use of English is called ESL (English as a Second Language). This term has been criticized on the grounds that many learners already speak more than one language. A counter-argument says that the word "a" in the phrase "a second language" means there is no presumption that English is the second acquired language. TESL is the Teaching of English as a Second Language. In the UK, Ireland and New Zealand, the term ESL has been replaced by ESOL (English for Speakers of Other Languages). In these countries TESOL (Teaching English to Speakers of Other Languages) is normally used to refer to teaching English only to this group. In the UK, the term EAL (English as an Additional Language), rather than ESOL, is usually used when talking about primary and secondary schools.

Other acronyms were created to describe the person rather than the language to be learned. The term LEP (Limited English Proficiency) was created in 1975 by the Lau Remedies following a decision of the US Supreme Court. ELL (English Language Learner), used by United States governments and school systems, was created by Charlene Rivera of the Center for Equity and Excellent in Education in an effort to label learners positively, rather than ascribing a deficiency to them. LOTE (Languages other than English) is a parallel term used in Canada, Australia, and New Zealand.

Typically, this sort of English (called ESL in the United States, Canada, and Australia, ESOL in the United Kingdom, Ireland and New Zealand)

is learned to function in the new host country, e.g. within the school system (if a child), to find and hold down a job (if an adult), to perform the necessities of daily life. The teaching of it does not presuppose literacy in the mother tongue. It is usually paid for by the host government to help newcomers settle into their adopted country, sometimes as part of an explicit citizenship program. It is technically possible for ESL to be taught not in the host country, but in, for example, a refugee camp, as part of a pre-departure program sponsored by the government soon to receive new potential citizens. In practice, however, this is extremely rare.

SELF-ASSESSMENT EXERCISE 3

To study English as a Second Language means that one must have proficiency in a first language. Defend this statement.

3.4 English as a Foreign Language

According to Quirk *et al* (1979) “By foreign language we mean a language as used by someone for communication across frontiers or with people who are not his countrymen: listening to broadcasts, reading books or newspapers, commerce or travel, for example. No language is more widely studied or used as a foreign language than English.” Therefore, the desire to learn it is immense and apparently insatiable. American organizations such as the United States Information Agency and the Voice of America have played a notable role in recent years, in close and amicable liaison with the British Council which provides support for English teaching both in the Commonwealth and in foreign countries throughout the world. The BBC, like the USIS, has notable radio and television facilities devoted to this purpose. Other English-speaking countries such as Australia also assume heavy responsibilities for teaching English as a foreign language. Taking the education systems of the world as a whole, one may say confidently (if perhaps ruefully) that more timetable hours are devoted to English than any other subject in the school system. The reasons are many. English is a top requirement of those seeking good jobs - and is often the language in which much of the business of ‘good jobs’ is conducted. One needs it for access to at least one half of the world’s scientific literature. It is thus intimately associated with technological and economic development and it is the principal language of international aid. Not only is it the universal language of international aviation, shipping and sport: it is to a considerable degree the universal language of literacy and public communication. Siegfried Muller (former Director of the Languages-of-the-World Archives in the US Department of Education) has estimated that about 60 per cent of the world’s radio broadcasts and 70 per cent of the world’s mail are in English. Countries like Germany and Japan use

English as their principal advertising and sales medium; it is the language of automation and computer technology.

EFL, English as a Foreign Language, indicates the use of English in a non-English-speaking region. Study can occur either in the student's home country, as part of the normal school curriculum or otherwise, or, for the more privileged minority, in an Anglophone country that they visit as a sort of educational tourist, particularly immediately before or after graduating from the university. TEFL is the Teaching of English as a Foreign Language; note that this sort of instruction can take place in any country, English-speaking or not. Typically, EFL is learned either to pass exams as a necessary part of one's education, or for career progression while working for an organization or business with an international focus. EFL may be part of the state school curriculum in countries where English has no special status. Teachers of EFL generally assume that students are literate in their mother tongue.

SELF-ASSESSMENT EXERCISE 4

EFL and ESL are for non-natives of England. State clearly the essence of teaching EFL

3.5 English as Lingua Franca

English as a Lingua Franca (ELF) explains a way of communication in English between speakers with different first languages. Since roughly only one out of every four users of English in the world is a native speaker of the language Crystal (2003), most ELF interactions take place among 'non-native' speakers of English. Although this does not preclude the participation of English native speakers in ELF interaction, what is distinctive about ELF is that, in most cases, it is 'a 'contact language' between persons who share neither a common native tongue nor a common (national) culture, and for whom English is the chosen foreign language of communication' (Firth 1996:240). Defined in this way, ELF is part of the more general phenomenon of 'English as an International Language' (EIL) or 'World Englishes'. However, when English is chosen as the means of communication among people from different first language backgrounds, across lingua-cultural boundaries, the preferred term is 'English as a lingua franca'. Despite being welcomed by some and deplored by others, it cannot be denied that English functions as a global lingua franca.

However, what has so far tended to be denied is that, as a consequence of its international use, English is being shaped at least as much by its nonnative speakers as by its native speakers. This has led to a somewhat paradoxical situation: on the one hand, for the majority of its users, English is a foreign language, and the vast majority of verbal exchanges

in English do not involve any native speakers of the language at all. On the other hand, there is still a tendency for native speakers to be regarded as custodians over what is acceptable usage.

Thus, the features of English which tend to be crucial for international intelligibility and therefore need to be taught for production and reception are being distinguished from the ('non-native') features that tend not to cause misunderstandings and thus do not need to constitute a focus for teaching production for those learners who intend to use English mainly in international settings. Acting on these insights can free valuable teaching time for more general language awareness and communication strategies; these may have more 'mileage' for learners than striving for mastery of fine nuances of native speaker language use that are communicatively redundant or even counter-productive in lingua franca settings, and which may anyway not be teachable in advance, but only learnable by subsequent experience of the language. More so, English language in many countries is regarded as a lingua franca in science and scholarship.

4.0 CONCLUSION

It is worth noting that ESL and EFL programs also differ in the variety of English which is taught; "English" is a term that can refer to various dialects, including British English, American English, and many others. However, for those who do not intend to change countries, the question arises of which sort of English to learn. If they are going abroad for a short time to study English, they need to choose which country. For those staying at home, the choice may be made for them in that private language schools or the state school system may only offer one model. Students studying EFL in Hong Kong, for example, are more likely to learn British English, whereas students in the Philippines are more likely to learn American English. For this reason, many teachers now emphasize teaching English as an International Language (EIL), also known as English as a Lingua Franca (ELF). Linguists are charting the development of international English, a term with contradictory and confusing a meaning, one of which refers to a de-contextualized variant of the language, independent of the culture and associated References/ Further Reading of any particular country, useful when, for example, a Saudi does business with someone from China or Albania. Each categorization, however, is aimed at enhancing the proper teaching and learning of English in various situations and for various reasons. It will be right to conclude that these categories have been serving the desired purposes among those who accept and apply them.

5.0 SUMMARY

Language teaching practice often assumes that most of the difficulties that learners face in the study of English are a consequence of the degree to which their native language differs from English. A native speaker of Chinese, for example, may face many more difficulties than a native speaker of German, because German is closely related to English, whereas Chinese is not. This may be true for anyone of any mother tongue (also called first language, normally abbreviated L_1) setting out to learn any other language (called a target language, second language or L_2). Language learners often produce errors of syntax and pronunciation thought to result from the influence of their L_1 , such as mapping its grammatical patterns inappropriately onto the L_2 , pronouncing certain sounds incorrectly or with difficulty, and confusing items of vocabulary known as *false friends*. This is known as L_1 transfer or "language interference". However, these transfer effects are typically stronger for beginners' language production, and research has highlighted many errors which cannot be attributed to the L_1 , as they are attested in learners of many language backgrounds (for example, failure to apply 3rd person present singular -s to verbs, as in 'he make'). While English is no more complex than other languages, it has several features which may create difficulties for learners. Conversely, because such a large number of people are studying it, products have been developed to help them do so, such as ESL, EFL, and ELF among other categorizations, which are often applied in pedagogy of English learning.

6.0 TUTOR-MARKED ASSIGNMENT

Answer the following questions carefully:

- i. What are the major reasons for the evolution of EFL in countries with different L_1 .
- ii. What requirements qualify a country for English as a Lingua Franca (ELF).
- iii. The teaching of English as a second language presupposes that the learner requires English for a global communication. Discuss properly.
- iv. ESL and EFL are taught in Nigeria, explain why Nigeria teaches the two.
- v. Explain if Nigeria could be described as ENL country.

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UNIT 4 ENGLISH LANGUAGE AND STANDARDIZATION

CONTENTS

- 1.0 Introduction
- 2.0 Objectives
- 3.0 Main Content
 - 3.1 General Overview
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 - 3.3 Pronunciation and Standard English
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1.0 INTRODUCTION

In this unit, we will study the concept of Standard English and the existence of national English standards in many countries of the world. Since the essence of English studies is aimed at the standard form of communication and the need for international intelligibility, the need arises to study what is meant by ‘Standard English’ and why some Anglophone countries opted for their kind of standard in English. There are reasons why a language gets acculturated in different local settings. Language responds to settings and locales. It respects the linguistic behaviours of a given area and tries to subsume into it. We shall explore how English language varieties survive in most countries, irrespective of the various interferences inhibiting the emergence of a standard one.

2.0 OBJECTIVES

At the end of this unit, you should be able to:

- understand the meaning of Standard English;
- compare English language use in most countries to British Standard English;
- appreciate the existence of national standards of English in most countries;
- know the reasons for interferences in English use in many countries; and
- realize why Standard English forms are difficult to be achieved.

HOW TO STUDY THE UNIT

- a. Read this unit as diligently as possible.
- b. Find meaning of unfamiliar words in the unit using your dictionary.
- c. As you read, put major points down in a piece of paper or jotter.
- d. Do not go to the next section until you have fully understood the section you are reading now.
- e. Do all the Self-Assessment exercises in the unit as honestly as you can. In some areas where it is not feasible to provide answers

3.0 MAIN CONTENT

3.1 General Overview

The need to standardize English has been of prominent concern to English language linguists. The major problem in the realization of this vision is the existence of varieties of dialects of English existing worldwide. Within each of these dialect areas, there is considerable variation in speech according to education and social standing. There is also an important polarity of uneducated and educated speech in which the former can be identified with the regional dialect most completely and the latter moves away from dialectal usage to a form of English that cuts across dialectal boundaries. One would have to look rather hard (or be a skilled dialectologist) to find, as an outsider, a New Englander who said *see* for *saw*, a Pennsylvanian who said *seen*, and a Virginian who said *seed*. These are forms that tend to be replaced by *saw* with schooling, and in speaking to a stranger a dialect speaker would tend to use 'school' forms. On the other hand, there is no simple equation of dialectal and uneducated English. Just as educated English cuts across dialectal boundaries, so do many features of uneducated use: a prominent example is the double negative as in *I don't want no cake* which has been outlawed from all educated English by the prescriptive grammar tradition for hundreds of years but which continues to thrive in uneducated speech wherever English is spoken.

Dialects of a sort naturally tend to be given the additional prestige of government agencies, the learned professions, the political parties, the press, the law court and the pulpit - any institution which must attempt to address itself to a public beyond the smallest dialectal community. The general acceptance of 'BBC English' for this purpose over almost half a century is paralleled by a similar designation for general educated idiom in the United States, 'network English'. By reason of the fact that educated English is thus accorded implicit social and political sanction, it comes to be referred to as Standard English, and provided we remember that this does not mean an English that has been formally standardized by official action, as weights and measures are standardized, the term is useful and appropriate. In contrast with

Standard English, forms that are especially associated with uneducated (rather than dialectal) use are often called ‘non-standard’. We examine further the real meaning and bounds of Standard English.

SELF-ASSESSMENT EXERCISE 1

The question of Standardisation is only possible within the educated users of English. How true is this statement?

3.2 The Concept of Standard English

According to Quirk *et al.* (1979), “the degree of acceptance of a single standard of English throughout the world, across a multiplicity of political and social systems, is a truly remarkable phenomenon: more so since the extent of the uniformity involved has, if anything, increased in the present century. Uniformity is greatest in what is from most viewpoints the least important type of linguistic organization - the purely secondary one of orthography.” In fact, printing houses in all English-speaking countries retain a tiny element of individual decision as in spellings (realize, -ise; judg(e)ment; etc), there is basically a single, graphological spelling and punctuation system throughout: with two minor subsystems. The one is the subsystem with British orientation (used in all English-speaking countries except the United States) with distinctive forms in only a small class of words *colour, centre, levelled*, etc. The other is the American subsystem: *color, center, leveled*, etc. In Canada, the British subsystem is used for the most part, but some publishers (especially of popular material) follow the American subsystem and some a mixture *color* but *centre*. In America, some newspaper publishers (not book publishers) use a few additional separate spellings such as *thru* for *through*. One minor orthographic point is oddly capable of Anglo-American misunderstanding: the numerical form of dates. In British (and European) practice ‘7/11/72’ would mean ‘7 November 1972’, but in American practice it would mean ‘July 11 1972’.

In grammar and vocabulary, Standard English presents somewhat less of a monolithic character, but even so the world-wide agreement is extraordinary and seems actually to be increasing under the impact of closer world communication and the spread of identical material and non-material culture. The uniformity is especially close in neutral or formal styles of written English on subject matter not of obviously localized interest: in such circumstances one can frequently go on for page after page without encountering a feature which would identify the English as belonging to one of the national standards. Standard English is a guide towards avoiding those elements of imperfection resulting from social, environmental, cultural and political idealisms affecting the correct use of English.

SELF-ASSESSMENT EXERCISE 2

A Standard language is a rule for checkmating errors in a language by the second language users. Is this true in the emergence of Standard English usage?

3.3 Pronunciation and Standard English

One of the basic criteria for identifying Standard English proper is that of pronunciation. This does not exhaust the regional or national variants that approximate to the status of a standard, but the important point to stress is that all of them are remarkable primarily in the tiny extent to which even the most firmly established, BrE and AmE, differ from each other in vocabulary, grammar and orthography. Pronunciation is a special case for several reasons. In the first place, it is the type of linguistic organization which distinguishes one national standard from another most immediately and completely and which links in a most obvious way the national standards to the regional varieties. Secondly, it is the least institutionalized aspect of Standard English, in the sense that, provided our grammar and lexical items conform to the appropriate national standard, it matters less that our pronunciation follows closely our individual regional pattern. As Quirk *et al.* (1979) emphasize, 'this is doubtless because pronunciation is essentially gradient, a matter of 'more or less' rather than the discrete 'this or that' features of grammar and lexicon.' Thirdly, norms of pronunciation are subject less to educational and national constraints than to social ones: this means, in effect, that some regional accents are less acceptable for 'network use' than others.

In BrE, one type of pronunciation comes close to enjoying the status of 'standard': it is the accent associated with the English public schools, 'Received Pronunciation' or 'RP'. Because this has traditionally been transmitted through a private education system based upon boarding schools insulated from the locality in which they happen to be situated, it is importantly non-regional, and this - together with the obvious prestige that the social importance of its speakers has conferred on it - has been one of its strengths as a lingua franca. But RP no longer has the unique authority it had in the first half of the twentieth century. It is now only one of the accents commonly used on the BBC and takes its place along with others. Thus, the rule that a specific type of pronunciation is relatively unimportant seems to be in the process of losing the notable exception that RP has constituted.

SELF-ASSESSMENT EXERCISE 3

A pronunciation pattern like the RP is not the only indication for Standard English usage. Discuss other criteria that determine language standard.

3.4 National Standard English: A Variant of Standard English

English language varieties in most countries have assumed a national standard of English usage. These standards rather than the British Standard English are aspired to the educational institutions. Scots, with ancient national and educational institutions, is perhaps nearest to the self-confident independence of BrE and AmE, though the differences in grammar and vocabulary are rather few. There is the preposition *outwith* ‘except’ and some other grammatical features, and such lexical items as *advocate* in the sense ‘practising lawyer’ or *bailie* ‘municipal magistrate’ and several others which, like this, refer to Scottish affairs. Orthography is identical with BrE though *burgh* corresponds closely to ‘borough’ in meaning and might almost be regarded as a spelling variant. But this refers only to official Scots usage.

Irish English should also be regarded as a national standard for though we lack descriptions of this long-standing variety of English, it is consciously and explicitly regarded as independent of BrE by educational and broadcasting services. The proximity of Britain, the easy movement of population, and like factors mean however that there is little room for the assertion and development of separate grammar and vocabulary. In fact, it is probable that the influence of BrE (and even AmE) is so great on both Scots and Irish English that independent features will diminish rather than increase with time.

Canadian English is in a similar position in relation to AmE. Close economic, social and intellectual links along a 4000-mile frontier have naturally caused the larger community to have an enormous influence on the smaller, not least in language. Though in many respects (*zed* instead of *zee*, for example, as the name of the letter ‘z’), Canadian English follows British rather than United States practice, and has a modest area of independent lexical use (*pogey* ‘welfare payment’, *riding* ‘parliamentary constituency’, *muskeg* ‘kind of bog’), in many other respects it has approximated to AmE, and in the absence of strong institutionalizing forces it seems likely to continue in this direction.

South Africa, Australia and New Zealand are in a very different position, remote from the direct day-to-day impact of either BrE or AmE. While in orthography and grammar South African English in educated use is virtually identical with BrE, rather considerable

differences in vocabulary have developed, largely under the influence of the other official language of the country, Afrikaans. For example, *veld* 'open country', *koppie* 'hillock', *dorp* 'village', *konfyt* 'candied peel'. Because of the remoteness from Britain or America, few of these words have spread: an exception is *trek* 'journey'.

New Zealand English is more like BrE than any other non-European variety, though it has adopted quite a number of words from the indigenous Maoris (for example, *whare* 'hut' and of course *kiwi* and other names for fauna and flora) and over the past half century has come under the powerful influence of Australia and to a considerable extent of the United States.

Australian English is undoubtedly the dominant form of English in the Antipodes and by reason of Australia's increased wealth, population and influence in world affairs, this national standard is exerting an influence in the northern hemisphere, particularly in Britain. Much of what is distinctive in Australian English is confined to familiar use. This is especially so of grammatical features like adverbials but or the use of the feminine pronoun both anaphorically for an inanimate noun (job... her) and also impersonally and non-referentially for 'things in general'. But there are many lexical items that are to be regarded as fully standard: not merely the special *fauna* and *flora* (*kangaroo*, *gumtree*, *wattle*, etc) but special Australian uses of familiar words (*paddock* as a general word for 'field', *crook* 'ill', etc), and special Australian words (*bowyang* 'a trouser strap', *waddy* 'a bludgeon', etc).

SELF-ASSESSMENT EXERCISE 4

What factors are responsible for the option of a national standard of English in many countries instead of British Standard English?

4.0 CONCLUSION

The important point to stress is English acquired by speakers of other languages, whether as a foreign or as a second language, varies not merely with the degree of proficiency attained but with the specific native language background. The Frenchman who says, '*I am here since Thursday*' is imposing a French grammatical usage on English; the Russian who says '*There are four assistants in our chair of mathematics*' is imposing a Russian lexico-semantic usage on the English word '*chair*'. Most obviously, we always tend to impose our native phonological pattern on any foreign language we learn. At the opposite extreme are interference varieties that are so wide-spread in a community and of such long standing that they may be thought stable and adequate enough to be institutionalized and regarded as varieties of English in their own right, rather than on stages on the way to a more native-like English or Standard English. There is active debate on these

issues in India, Pakistan, Nigeria and several African countries, where efficient and fairly stable varieties of English are prominent in educated use at the highest political and professional level.

5.0 SUMMARY

Apart from the interferences from the local languages towards proper standardization of English, there is also the influence of *pidgins* and *creoles* of English in most countries. At the extremes of *Creole* and *Pidgin* there is especial interdependence between the form of language and the occasion and purposes of use: indeed the very name *Pidgin* (from ‘business’) reminds us that its nature is inclined to be restricted to a few practical subjects. *Creole* is usually more varied but again it tends to be used of limited subject matter (local, practical and family affairs). As to English taught at an advanced intellectual level as a second or foreign language, our constant concern must be that enough proficiency will be achieved to allow the user the flexibility he needs in handling public administration, a learned discipline such as medicine with its supporting scientific literature, and informal social intercourse. To create a standard means to obey rules for its existence. Thus, standardization of English seemed difficult as a result of regions, educational status, interference and other salient factors like the influence of L₁ and the emergence of corrupt varieties. Every learner of English aims at the attainment of almost an error free standard but it must be borne in mind that the native speakers of English are not conscious of errors in the language the way the second and foreign learners are conscious.

6.0 TUTOR-MARKED ASSIGNMENT

Answer the following questions carefully:

- i. Explain thoroughly the factors inhibiting the attainment of standard English teaching outside Britain.
- ii. ‘Received Pronunciation’ seemed a pronunciation standard for recognizing Standard English. What are the other linguistic criteria for attaining this standard?
- iii. Differentiate properly between ‘Standard English’ and ‘National English Standard’.
- iv. Pidgins and Creoles are real problems in the standardization of English worldwide. Explain the concepts property with examples.
- v. Many English linguists like Quirk, Chomsky and Halliday believe that English language responds to changes. Is it possible to have changes and still retain standards?

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UNIT 5 COMPETENCE AND PERFORMANCE

CONTENTS

- 1.0 Introduction
- 2.0 Objectives
- 3.0 Main Content
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 - 3.2 Competence and Performance
 - 3.3 Points of Convergence & Divergence
- 4.0 Conclusion
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1.0 INTRODUCTION

In this unit, we will study two basic theories of language acquisition and language use which have influenced sociolinguistic studies. The first of the theories is the theory of ‘Langue and Parole’ by Ferdinand de Saussure while second of the theories is ‘Competence and Performance’ by Noam Chomsky. The basic notion of these theories is hinged on the concept of language, acceptability of language use and individual application of language codes. We will study the points of convergence and divergence between the theories and the sociolinguistic implications.

2.0 OBJECTIVES

At the end of this unit, you should be able to:

- understand the theories of langue and parole;
- know the theories of competence and performance;
- distinguish the two theories properly;
- realize the implication of the theories in sociolinguistics; and
- accept that individual language use must be in line with societal needs.

HOW TO STUDY THE UNIT

- a. Read this unit as diligently as possible.
- b. Find meaning of unfamiliar words in the unit using your dictionary.
- c. As you read, put major points down in a piece of paper or jotter.
- d. Do not go to the next section until you have fully understood the section you are reading now.
- e. Do all the Self-Assessment exercises in the unit as honestly as you can. In some areas where it is not feasible to provide answers

3.0 MAIN CONTENT

3.1 General Overview

Language acquisition and use is related to a society's growth and development. In traditional grammar and philosophy, language is believed to be a heavenly property which comes from birth and not learned. Language was also seen as a prescriptive phenomenon whereby the users have nothing to contribute to it. In 1916, the publication of Ferdinand de Saussure's *Course in General Linguistics* (posthumously by his students) marked a turning point in the study of human language. It marked the beginning of linguistics and the starting of scientific analysis of human utterance. De Saussure recognized the concept of 'Langue and Parole' in human language. Simply translated, "langue" and "parole" are "language" and "speech", however, such a translation is misleading because those terms are almost synonyms. Jonathon Culler, an American Deconstructionist who has written extensively on Saussure, defined langue and parole in the introduction as follows: "...Saussure's most fundamental contribution, on which all of modern linguistics rests, was the step by which he postulated a suitable object for linguistic study. If linguistics tries to concern itself with every fact relating to language, it will become a confused morass. The only way to avoid this is to isolate a coherent object which will provide both a goal for analysis and a principle of relevance. And that is precisely what he did, distinguishing with a bold stroke between language as a system (la langue) and the actual manifestations of language in speech or writing (la parole)..."

This distinction between langue and parole has been important not only for linguistics but for other disciplines as well, where it can be rendered as a distinction between institution and event, or between the underlying system which makes possible various types of behavior and actual instances of such behavior. Study of the system leads to the construction of a model which represents the various possibilities and their derivation within the system, whereas study of actual behavior leads to the construction of statistical models which represent the probabilities of particular actions under specified conditions.

Roy Harris in his version of the CGL translates la langue using the terms linguistic structure (a bold and excellent translation). Three points are crucial to la langue:

1. its theoretical character (it is invented to explain the occurrence and distribution of forms in parole),
2. its systematic or relational character (its terms mutually define and compete with each other)

3. it is an "institution" or social construct and by definition the inheritance of the many.

La langue then is shared linguistic structure. Saussure explained la langue as follows: "It is a fund accumulated by the members of the community through the practice of speech, a grammatical system existing potentially in every brain, or more exactly in the brains of a group of individuals; for the language is never complete in any single individual, but exists perfectly only in the collectivity..." (*Course in General Linguistics*, Harris translation, 13). Note that this definition avoids aligning la langue with any particular definition of a language or a dialect: the "collectivity" remains undefined. However, among scholars, these concepts have generated a lot of controversies. Noam Chomsky gave his own version but he has a slight shift from those of Saussure.

SELF-ASSESSMENT EXERCISE 1

Explain the contributions of Ferdinand de Saussure in modern linguistics.

3.2 Competence Grammar versus Performance Grammar

The limitations of current language processing systems are not surprising: they follow immediately from the fact that these systems are built on a competence-grammar in the Chomskyan sense. Chomsky made an emphatic distinction between the "competence" of a language user and the "performance" of this language user. The competence consists in the knowledge of language which the language user in principle has; the performance is the result of the psychological process that employs this knowledge (in producing or in interpreting language utterances). The formal grammars that theoretical linguistics is concerned with, aim at characterizing the competence of the language user. But the References/ Further Reading that language users display in dealing with syntactically ambiguous sentences constitute a prototypical example of a phenomenon that in the Chomskyan view belongs to the realm of performance.

There is ambiguity-problem from an intrinsic limitation of linguistic competence-grammars: such grammars define the sentences of a language and the corresponding structural analyses, but they do not specify a probability ordering or any other ranking between the different sentences or between the different analyses of one sentence. This limitation is even more serious when a grammar is used for processing input which frequently contains mistakes. Such a situation occurs in processing spoken language. The output of a speech recognition system is always very imperfect, because such a system often only makes

guesses about the identity of its input-words. In this situation the parsing mechanism has an additional task, which it doesn't have in dealing with correctly typed alpha-numeric input. The speech recognition module may discern several alternative word sequences in the input signal; only one of these is correct, and the parsing-module must employ its syntactic information to arrive at an optimal decision about the nature of the input. A simple yes/no judgment about the grammaticality of a word sequence is insufficient for this purpose: many word sequences are strictly speaking grammatical but very implausible; and the number of word sequences of this kind gets larger when a grammar accounts for a larger number of phenomena.

To construct effective language processing systems, we must therefore implement performance-grammars rather than competence-grammars. These performance-grammars must not only contain information about the structural possibilities of the general language system, but also about "accidental" details of the actual language use in a language community, which determine the language experiences of an individual, and thereby influence what kind of utterances this individual expects to encounter, and what structures and meanings these utterances are expected to have.

The linguistic perspective on performance involves the implicit assumption that language behaviour can be accounted for by a system that comprises a competence-grammar as an identifiable sub-component. But because of the ambiguity problem this assumption is computationally unattractive: if we would find criteria to prefer certain syntactic analyses above others, the efficiency of the whole process might benefit if these criteria were applied in an early stage, integrated with the strictly syntactic rules. This would amount to an integrated implementation of competence- and performance-notions.

But we can also go one step further, and fundamentally question the customary concept of a competence-grammar. We can try to account for language-performance without invoking an explicit competence-grammar. (This would mean that grammaticality-judgments are to be accounted for as performance phenomena which do not have a different cognitive status than other performance phenomena.)

SELF-ASSESSMENT EXERCISE 2

Defend the statement that competence-grammar forms the basis for performance-grammar.

3.3 Points of Convergence & Divergence

There is a similarity between Chomsky's *competence* and *performance* and Saussure's terms *langue* and *parole*. Chomsky explains *competence*

as a factor that refers to a speaker's knowledge of his language that enables him to understand an infinite number of sentences often never heard or produced before. Similar, in Saussure's point of view, the term *langue* represents the general system of language. *Performance* refers to the actual use and realization of language, which is alike to *parole*, that relates to the appliance of language, the actual process of speaking.

To exemplify how Chomsky and Saussure thought and why they used the terms they did, one can use the phrase 'structure rules'. A sentence can be fragmented into single units that describe the structure of a sentence. S can be analyzed into NP and VP, NP into DET and N or into PN for example. A (native) speaker knows all these rules, even though he might not be completely aware of it. The general concept of the internalization of the rules is similar to competence while usage of them can be referred to *performance* and *parole*. *Langue* and *competence* are not too similar here, because *langue* does not contain any dynamic rules, but is only a system of signs.

Apart from this affinity there is an important difference that has to be mentioned. Chomsky sees *competence* as an attribute of the individual person, whereas Saussure stated that "language exists perfectly only within a collectivity". Another important difference is that *langue* only refers to the sign system.

SELF-ASSESSMENT EXERCISE 3

Outline clearly the similarity between Saussure and Chomsky's theories.

4.0 CONCLUSION

In linguistics, the innateness hypotheses assume that every human being has a mental language faculty. It states that human beings are genetically equipped with a Universal Grammar. This contains basic principles and properties that are common to all human languages and therefore it represents the basis for language acquisition by supporting and facilitating it. The main reason for proposing this theory is called the "poverty of the stimulus". It describes the gap between the information about the grammar of a language that we are exposed to during our childhood and the knowledge that we ultimately attain. The stimulus, the linguistic experience, of a child is not sufficient in order to construct the grammar of his/her language. In fact, there are several inadequacies in the stimulus: First, not every sentence a child is exposed to is grammatical. Second, the received information is limited, and third, children gain knowledge without further evidence. Nevertheless, the child succeeds in obtaining linguistic competence, so there must be an additional element for support. Thus, language acceptability and use is determined by the stated rules of communication from which the

individuals operate. The child in the social milieu performs from the existing linguistic phenomena around him and this makes him belong to that society properly.

5.0 SUMMARY

The essence of language use is communication. Correlation establishes a close connection between language and the social, but does so by leaving each as quite separate entities and leaving language as autonomous; language itself is not changed by the actions of individuals. The distinction between *langue* and *parole* by Saussure is to create an enabling understanding between language use and language acquisition. He believes that language is a sign and that people in a given society use these signs to communicate ideas. He thus postulates that these signs form the core from which other people draw from in order to transmit ideas and information. While *langue* can be acquired, Chomsky believes that competence is an idealized phenomenon which may not be acquired. In this vein, competence is not an achievable phenomenon but performance can be achieved since it is judged based on individual performance. In sociolinguistics, individuals perform language in order to belong to the society while a society may use a language form that is acceptable by the entirety of the people in order to foster harmony in communication.

6.0 TUTOR-MARKED ASSIGNMENT

Answer the following questions carefully:

- i. Discuss the contributions of Saussure in modern linguistics.
- ii. Discuss Chomsky's opposition to 'langue' and 'parole'.
- iii. Compare *langue* with competence.
- iv. Explain the relationship between performance and *parole*.
- v. Relate these theories to sociolinguistic studies.

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