

Chapter 1

Grammar in the Systemic Structure of Language

1.1. Language as System and Structure

Language is a means of forming and storing ideas as reflections of reality and exchanging them in the process a human intercourse. Language is social by nature; it is inseparably connected with the people who are its creators and users; it grows and develops together with the development of the society.

Human language is characterized by the systemic nature as a whole and of the elements making up the whole. The two notions “**system**” and “**structure**” are usually applied in the internal analysis of Language. But there is no contradiction in applying these notions to language. The term “**system**” is applied to a complex object as a whole structure made up of separate parts. The elements of the structure are the components of the multitude; they possess the systemic value as the members of the given system which can be conceived through the establishment of the systemic relations between the elements of the system.

Language as a system is characterized as an orderly arrangement of cognate elements interrelated in the whole (structure).

Some linguists consider “**sphericity**” and “**nucleation**” to be the mode of language organization. Accordingly, the system of language is parted into separate spheres or subsystems each of which displays systemic characteristics too: Grammar, Lexicon, and Phonetics. Only the unity of these three elements forms a language; without any of them there is no human language.

Each of these constituent parts of language is studied by a particular **linguistic discipline** (see *table 1.1*). The phonological description of language is effected by the science of Phonology; the lexical description of language is the domain of Lexicology; the grammatical description of language is given by the science of Grammar.

The system of Language includes, on the one hand, the material units (see *table 1.2*) – sounds, morphemes, words, word-groups; on the other hand, – the rules how to use these units in speech.

Units of language are divided into segmental and supra-segmental (see *fig. 1.1*).

Subsystems of Language Structure

Subsystems of Language	Linguistic Disciplines
The phonological description of Language	Phonology
The lexical description of Language	Lexicology
Word-Building processes in Language	Lexicology / Grammar
The morphological description of Language	Grammar
The syntactical description of Language	Grammar
Text organization in Language	Textlinguistics

Units of Language as the Object Matter of Linguistic Disciplines

Unit of Language	Aspect of Language	Linguistic Discipline	
Text	Text organization	Textlinguistics	
Sentence Phrase	Syntax	Grammar	
Word	Inflection		Morphology
	Derivational morpheme	Word-Building	Lexicology / Grammar
	Stem	Lexical Semantics	Lexicology
Phoneme	Phonetics	Phonology	

Segmental units consist of phonemes, which form morphemes, words, phrases, sentences and texts.

Supra-segmental units do not exist by themselves. These are intonation contours, accents, pauses, patterns of word-order. They are realized together with segmental units and express different meanings.

The lowest level of lingual segments is phonemic. The **phoneme** is the smallest language unit; it has no meaning of its own but it is meaning distinctive: it differentiates morphemes and words as material bodies.