



Comparative Study Between Traditional Grammar and Modern Linguistics

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ABSTRACT

This article analysis the traditional grammar and modern linguistics, and mainly reveals their similarities and differences. It is clear that linguistics is a science of linguistic study, which starts from descriptive grammar, structure grammar, functional grammar, transformational-generative grammar and many other grammars. It points out that though they are quite different, traditional grammar is the base from which modern linguistics is derived.

Keywords:

Traditional Grammar, Modern Linguistics, Descriptive Grammar, Difference, Relationship, Language, Phonology, Inflection, Lexical Changes

Language changes, from generation to generation, at levels of sound, form and meaning. Thus grammar, as the method of analyzing these changes, altered accordingly. One of the main features of grammar is its usually based on meaning. According to Traditional grammar, a sentence is a group of words that express a complete idea. Traditional Grammar often analyses it from meaning, from meaning to form; from the viewpoint of language teaching, Traditional grammar doesn't give a systematic description of linguistic phenomenon. It often gives description at surface level and often analyzes a sentence in isolation not at a discourse level. And sometimes, it even without description level, so it doesn't provide the teacher with a satisfactory description of language he is teaching, and not provide for the student sufficient description of language he need to learn. Traditional grammar usually describes the written language, without considering and studying the oral language. And also, it confuses the written with the oral form, but as we know, the system of oral language differs in some degree to written language. So Traditional Grammar cannot have the students

acquire the mechanism of oral communication. And Traditional grammar gives a predominant place to morphology and syntax, the treatment of lexis and phonology is very often inadequate in Traditional Grammar. Despite its disadvantages, Traditional Grammar is of great value to language teaching, school grammar, and a great many people still believe that it is a functional, elegant, time-honored way of teach people what they should know about language.

According to Modern Linguistics, language is a system and grammar is regarded as a systematic description of a certain language, either written or oral Grammar also refers to distributional analysis of surface structure elements according to distributional criteria. Also, phonetics, phonological and semantic components are considered in modern grammar. Generally speaking, modern grammar is currently evaluated on the basis of applicability, simplicity, completeness, explicitness, and lack of contradiction. Modern grammar starts from descriptive grammar, structure grammar, functional grammar, transformational-generative grammar and many other grammars.

Descriptive grammar describes how a language is actually spoken and written and does not describe how a language ought to be spoken or written. According to descriptive grammar, it states that speech is the basic form of language, and there is a difference between spoken and written language. Fries is a distinguished grammarian, his work 'American English Grammar' is a famous work. All words are classified into two parts: content words and functional words, not ten different parts of speech as in Traditional grammar. The content words refer to those words which have inflection and which have lexical meaning, such as noun, verb, adjective. Functional words are those words which place on important part in formulating structures, determines, subordinate conjunctions, auxiliaries and emphatic words.

Structural grammar is quite different from the traditional grammar. Instead of focusing on the individual word and its notional meaning or its part-of-speech function in the sentence, Structural grammar focuses on cluster of structures sounds, forms, word groups, phrases working from smaller to larger units. Structural grammar does not ignore semantic meaning, but it tends to emphasize syntactic over semantic meaning. That's why structural grammar analyzes the meaning carried by the syntactic patterns that morphemes and words make with each other, patterns like those formed by plural morphemes, modifier-verb or modifier-adjective connections, subject-predicate connections, and so on. Besides the general emphasis on morphology and syntax, Structural grammar developed three particularly useful analytical techniques: test frames, immediate constituent analysis, and sentence formulas. It presents an incomplete description of the grammatical system of language, and does not provide the rules needed to construct an infinite range of grammaticality. It attaches excessive weight to morphological and morph-phonological rules, but semantic relations received slight attention, it is the same with Traditional grammar. It describes the surface structure of sentences and mis-making a number of deep

generalizations. Structural grammar gives a criterion to determine grammaticality and degree of grammaticality of sentences. And it does not provide sufficient explanation to guarantee clear understanding and correct usage. This may lead learners to make errors. It excludes the treatment of meaning, but any grammatical analysis will be of no use if meaning is not taken into consideration. It doesn't provide satisfactory basis for another two important areas: constructive analysis and translation in applied linguistics.

Most modern linguistics is descriptive, because it attempts to describe what people actually say, not what people should say. It describes language in all its aspects, but does not prescribe rules of 'correctness'. This is in contrast with the study of language in previous centuries. It was mostly prescriptive. Traditional grammars told people how to use a language. Modern linguists, however, do not believe that there is an absolute standard of correctness concerning language use which linguists or school teachers should view as their duty to maintain. Instead, they would prefer to be observers and recorders of facts, but not judges. They believe that whatever occurs in natural speech such as hesitation, incomplete utterance, and misunderstanding should be describe in their analysis. They might recognize that one type of speech appears to be more socially acceptable than others because of the influence of fashion. But this will not make them think that socially acceptable variety can replace all the other varieties, or the old words are always better than new ones or vice visa. They will regard the changes in language and language uses as the result of a natural and continuous process, but not something to be feared. Language changes should be observed and described. However, this does not deny that languages have rules. They obviously do or we would not understand each other. On the other hand, no single rule or expression is necessarily there forever.

As a matter of fact, however, whether we think of the history of human speech in general or if the linguistic experience of the individual speaker, spoken language is the primary phenomenon, and writing is only a

more or less imperfect reflection of it. We all learn to understand speech before we learn to read, and to speak before we learn to write. We all hear more language than we read and speak a great deal more than we write. Spoken language is ordinarily more flexible than written language; it leads the way in linguistic development, while written language follows at a greater or less interval. Spoken language is considered as the primary medium for several reasons. Spoken language is prior to written language historically. In other words, it existed long, long before written systems came into being. Even today many well-developed languages do not have a written system yet. Genetically, children always learn to speak before they learn to write. Blind children have no difficulty in learning to speak but deaf children have great difficulty in learning to read. This shows that the channel of sight is not as important as the channel of sound in learning a language. However, this is not to deny the importance of written language, which has its own advantages that spoken language does not have. First, with written language, messages can be carried through space. Human voice is effective only within earshot. With the help of written language, we can send and receive messages across vast spaces. Secondly, with written language, messages can be carried through time. The spoken word 'dies' immediately, but a written message can be transmitted far beyond the moment of production often from generation to generation and from one culture to another. Thirdly, oral messages are subject to distortion, either unintentional when due to misunderstanding as an example or otherwise. Written messages, on the other hand, remain exactly the same whether read a thousand years later or ten thousand miles away. Spoken utterances share many common features with written sentences, but they also exhibit considerable differences. Therefore linguists believe spoken forms and written forms belong to different systems though they may overlap. The systems must be analyzed separately: the spoken first, then the written. It is sometimes claimed, for example, that a phrase such as for John is in the 'dative case'. But this is blatantly

untrue, since English does not have a Uzbek-type case system. At other times, the influence of the Uzbek framework is more subtle, and so more misleading. Many people have wrongly come to regard certain Latin categories as being 'natural' ones. For example, it is commonly assumed that the Latin tense divisions of past, present and future are inevitable. Yet one frequently meets languages which do not make this neat threefold distinction. In some languages, it is more important to express the duration of an action whether it is a single act or a continuing process than to locate the action in time. To understand any of the modern grammars, and to understand virtually all discussion about writing or literature at the level of stylistic analysis, one must have an understanding of the terminology drawn from Traditional grammar, if not of the whole system.

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