

The examples quoted are evidence that the tune is an important and characteristic feature of the American intonation system.

*An Introduction to Descriptive Linguistics* by H. A.

Gleason, Jr., Published by Holt, Rinehart and Winston. Revised Edition. Copyright 1955, 1961 by Holt, Rinehart and Winston, Inc.

In the Preface we can read the following: "One approach [to the study of language] has, however, received little attention until very recently: descriptive linguistics, the discipline which studies languages in terms of their internal structures. It differs from the other approaches in that it focuses its attention on different facets of human speech." . . . "This textbook . . . is not directed to prospective linguists alone; rather, widely various academic backgrounds and interests are assumed. Many of the students who use it will be particularly interested in understanding the place of descriptive linguistics among related disciplines." . . . "Brief treatments of historical linguistics, dialect studies, communication theory, and acoustic phonetics have been included primarily to show their very close relationship to descriptive linguistics."

"The first edition of this book was developed out of several years of teaching introductory linguistics at the Hartford Seminary Foundation. In a preliminary draft it was tested at a number of other institutions in a variety of courses." . . . "On the whole, . . . , it has stood the test and found favor with a growing number of teachers. The basic plan of the work, therefore, remains unchanged, though a number of small changes have been made. — New theoretical developments have come with increasing frequency. Questions which formerly were considered quite esoteric have come to be familiar subjects of discussion and debate. There is an increasing wealth of material which is available for inclusion in introductory courses . . ." ". . . it has been necessary to provide a somewhat wider selection of topics than in the first edition, and four chapters have been added." Nevertheless "The book remains an Introduction . . ." "The treatment of all subjects is, of course, only introductory; suggestions for further reading can be found in the bibliography." "This textbook may be used in an upperclass or graduate single-semester course by omitting the more marginal chapters. With some supplemental reading assignments, it is adaptable for a full-year course in general linguistics."

The arrangement of the material in chapters is as follows:

- 1 Language
- 2 English Consonants
- 3 The English Vowel System
- 4 English Stress and Intonation
- 5 The Morpheme
- 6 The Identification of Morphemes
- 7 Classing Allomorphs into Morphemes
- 8 Outline of English Morphology
- 9 Some Types of Inflection
- 10 Immediate Constituents
- 11 Syntactic Devices
- 12 Transformations
- 13 Language and Grammars
- 14 Some Inflectional Categories
- 15 Articulatory Phonetics

16	The Phoneme
17	Phonemic Analysis
18	Phonemic Field Work
19	Interpretations of English Phonemics
20	Phonemic Systems
21	Phonemic Problems in Language Learning
22	Acoustic Phonetics
23	The Process of Communication
24	Variation in Speech
25	Writing Systems
26	Written Languages
27	Language Classification
28	Some Languages and Language Families
	Selected Bibliography
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Chapter 1, dealing with the relations between natural phenomena and concepts and their expression or classification in language, gives a highly interesting example (§ 1.5) of the difference in the classification of colors. A diagram shows how the spectral colors are divided by speakers of English, Shona (a language of Rhodesia), and Bassa (a language of Liberia). Where English normally distinguishes six categories of colors using six different words, Shona uses three words and Bassa only two. It is perhaps still more interesting that for the purposes of botany two new, general color terms dividing the spectrum into two categories i. e. xanthic and cyanic have been introduced in English. This example serves to demonstrate that "It is largely fortuitous that the spectrum came to be so divided, that the specific words were attached to the colors so distinguished, or, indeed, that the sounds from which they were formed were so organized that these words were possible. These irrational facts, with many others like them, constitute the English language. Each language is a similarly arbitrary system."

Another curiosity mentioned in the chapter (§ 1.8) is that "English speakers can never make a statement without saying something about the number of every object mentioned. This is compulsory, whether it is relevant or not. In Chinese, objects are noted as singular or plural only when the speaker judges the information to be relevant. The Chinese experience suggests that it actually seldom is, for that language operates with only occasional references to number." — It might be added that similar is the case in Indonesian and Viet-Namese.

In learning a foreign language one may have to make changes in his habits of thought. "You may, for example, have to learn to think of every action as either completed or incomplete (in Russian, for instance), and to disregard the time of the action unless it has special relevance (for instance in Indonesian).

The inclusion of the data added in brackets might be of interest. The English consonants are treated in Chapter 2 on the basis of phonemic theory. Articulation and classification of the consonants are described.

Chapter 3 on the English vowel system introduces a new term „syllable nucleus". "A syllable nucleus will be defined as a vowel, or a vowel and a following semivowel." It is to be regretted, especially as regards the vowels, that the transcription system used in this book does not follow the IPA system more closely. This refers particularly to combinations with the symbol *H*, as (aH), (uH), (oH), etc. Under paragraph

3.14 it would be well to refer to paragraph 3.21 for a clearer explanation. The "semi-vowel (H)" could be represented much more readably by the IPA schwa symbol raised above the base line. The character of the glides (y), (w), and (H) is very well described.

Chapter 4 explains the different degrees of stress and their use. "Open transition" and related problems are dealt with. The treatment of this point is especially fine from the phonetic point of view. However, the phonemic aspect of things is dominant throughout the book. The use of diacritics over the vowels to show different degrees of stressing is, maybe, easier for the printers, but for the student it is difficult to interpret; line graphs are always preferable.

Chapter 5 explains the concepts of morpheme, grammar, roots, affixes and allomorphs.

Chapter 6 deals with the identification of morphemes. The material is illustrated with examples from Hebrew, Greek, Quileute, Tagalog and English.

It would be too long, however, to enumerate all the things that the different chapters contain.

The book, as the table of contents indicates, deals with all aspects of language. It explains all the modern linguistic terms and their application. Everything that a general linguist must know is in it. The treatment of each phenomenon is short and to the point, and the examples taken from a number of European and non-European languages are very interesting. Great emphasis given to phonemic theory.

While chapters 1—17 are devoted to basic linguistic theory and terminology, chapters 18—26 are mainly concerned with their practical application. Such practically conceived chapters are above all Chapter 18 on phonemic field work, Chapter 20 on phonemic systems, Chapter 21 on phonemic problems in language teaching. The last two chapters, Chapter 27 and Chapter 28 deal with the classification and grouping of languages. There are also three maps showing the geographical distribution of the chief language groups in Europe, the Near East, Africa, Southeast Asia, and North America. The reader would like to see similar maps of South America, Australia, Oceania and Asia to complete the picture.

H. A. Gleason's book is a comprehensive work that should be in the hands of all language teachers. Lecturers dealing with phonetics, English or general linguistics will find it a valuable guide and source.