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Preddiplomski studij engleskog jezika i književnosti

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Mentor: izv.prof.dr.sc. Tanja Gradečak Erdeljić

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Abstract

Linguistic typology is the branch of linguistics dealing with the study and classification of languages based their structural and functional features. These features include phonological, morphological and syntactic properties languages exhibit. When it comes to phonology, languages are observed through their vowel and consonant systems together with some specific features like tonality and stress. As it is often difficult to group languages based on their phonological features, it serves more as a descriptive tool rather than a classifying means. Morphological typology offers three different language types with their own specific features. Based on the manner morphemes are combined to form words and denote grammatical relations languages can be classified as isolating, polysynthetic and synthetic, further branching into agglutinating and fusional type. Still, there are languages not belonging to any group such as English, which, as will be shown, exhibits the features of two language types – analytic (isolating) and synthetic. The third linguistic branch observed – syntax - sets languages into groups based on their word orders, or the positions of subject, verb and object in a declarative sentence. English, belonging to the group with the most commonly used word orders (subject – verb – object) has obligatory word order due to its analytic features.

Key words: linguistic typology, isolating languages, polysynthetic languages, agglutinating languages, fusional languages, English language

1. ~~I~~Introduction

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Linguistic typology is one of the branches of linguistics dealing with the study and classification of languages. Unlike genetic and areal classifications, which deal with languages' descent and their features according to their geographical position, its focus is on the structural and functional features of languages.

As there is a vast variety of languages, so is there a large number of different features languages have. Based on the overlapping of certain features among languages, linguists are enabled to divide languages into certain groups according to those patterns and to explain the common properties and the structural diversity of the world's languages. The structural and functional features commonly used for the description and placement of languages into certain groups include phonological, morphological and syntactic properties languages exhibit. Phonological features are shown through vowel and consonant systems, morphological features through the manner morphemes are used to form words, and syntactic features through the word order possible in a language.

The purpose of this work is to show the linguistic features relevant for the comparison and classification of languages, as well as the groups formed as a consequence. As the main focus is on the English language, its basic features regarding the subject will be presented. Since English has features common with other languages and linguistic groups, their common properties and existing differences will be pointed out, especially when it comes to morphological typology.

2. Linguistic Typology

Linguistic typology is the field of linguistics which studies and classifies languages and whose aim is to describe and explain the common properties and structural diversity of the world's languages. The bases for the language classification in this field of linguistics are the structural and functional features languages exhibit.

While the difference between languages may seem vast, there is also a large number of characteristics that are common to all of them. Based on these differences and overlapping similarities, linguists are able to assign languages to certain groups and so~~,~~ determine the types of languages. Structural and functional features that are most relevant for linguistic typology are phonological systems, morphological structure, and word order patterns.

2.1. Phonological Systems

Phonological typology is the classification of linguistic systems based on phonological properties. It refers to the classification of the elements that make up a phonological system.[1] Despite some similarities occurring between languages it can often be seen as a less significant typological parameter since after dividing languages according to their phonological systems little can be further done in terms of the over~~-~~all typological structure of the languages in question.[2]

However, there are some features used for the classification. For example, languages can be divided into tonal and non-tonal ones. Tone is defined as the pitch contour on a word that can distinguish lexical meaning. The tonal languages, Chinese, Vietnamese, Thai, etc., have same sounds that are pronounced with different tones and can refer to different things depending on their tone. For example, in Mandarin Chinese the syllable *ma* with a falling tone means 'to scold' and with a rising tone it means 'hemp'.[3]

Another such feature is stress. Two groups can be distinguished here - languages with fixed and free stress. In the languages with free stress, like English, the position of stress is unpredictable. Languages with fixed stress can be further divided into other groups depending on the syllable carrying the stress. For example, in Hungarian and Czech stress is always on the first syllable. [4]

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[1] Hammond, M. Phonological Typology // Encyclopedia of Language and Linguistics / Ed. K.Brown. Boston: Elsevier Pergamon, 2006. p. 535

[2] Comrie, B. Language Universals and Linguistic Typology.// Chicago: The University of Chicago Press, 1989 p. 39

[3] Grasu, D. Tonal vs. Non-Tonal Languages: Chinese vs. English // 2015

[4] Goedeman, R., Hulst, van der R. Fixed Stress Locations // 2013.

When it comes to phonological systems in general, languages may be observed from two aspects: their vowel and their consonant systems.[5]

2.1.1 Vowel Systems

The difference between languages when it comes to their vowels is established through the size and pattern of their vowel systems. The most common number of vowels occurring in languages is five (*a, e, i, o,* and *u),* though that number may vary from as few as three up to nine. If the nasalization and the length are considered, that number becomes even higher.[6]

The most typical vowel system is shown in F~~the f~~igure 1[7]. In this case *i* and *u* are high vowels, *e* and *o are* mid vowels, and *a* is low. The front ones (*i* and *e*) and *a* are unrounded, while the back ones (*o* and *u*) are rounded.[8] In order to analyse the vowel system of a certain language, existing vowels may be compared and explained through the primary cardinal vowels shown in F~~the f~~igure 2.[9] These vowels represent the extremes of the vowel range most familiar to the speakers of European languages.[10]

Despite the differences there are some tendencies regarding the vowel system occurring in most languages:

- The most commonly occurring vowel phoneme is /a/, which is found in almost all of the languages of the world, the vowels /i/ and /u/ being almost as common.
- Front vowels phonemes (/i, e, æ, ɛ/) are generally unrounded, while non-low back vowel phonemes (/ɔ, o, u/) are generally rounded
- Low vowels (/æ, a, ɑ/) are generally unrounded. [11]

English vowel letters are *a, e, i, o, u,* and sometimes *y,* whose function may shift between a vowel as in *sky* and a consonant as in *yacht.* These letters produce more than twelve different vowel sounds as each of them can be pronounced in a different way depending on the context : as a long sound, as a short sound, and as schwa. English monophthongs are shown in ~~f~~Figure 3.[12]

~~Owing~~ Due to their large number, English vowels may be divided into four groups: short vowels, long vowels, diphthongs and triphtongs. The phonetic symbols for short vowels are ɪ, e,

[5] Steinbergs, A. The Classification of Languages. // Contemporary Linguistics/ Eds. M. Dobrovolsky, F. Katamba, W. O'Grady, 1997. p. 375

[6] Steinbergs, A. Work cited. p. 375
[7] Steinbergs, A. Work cited. p. 375
[8] Steinbergs, A. Work cited. p. 375
[9] Roach P. English Phonetics and Phonology.// Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1998. p. 13
[10] Roach P. Work cited, p.13
[11] Steinbergs, A. Work cited. p. 376
[12] McMahon A. An Introduction to English Phonology // Edinburgh: Edinburgh University Press, 2002. p 75

æ, ʌ, ɒ and ʊ. Long vowels are, as their name says, longer than the short vowels and their length is indicated by the two dots following the symbols. Their phonetic symbols are iː, eː, ɑː, ɔː and uː. The third group, diphthongs, involve the sounds created by the movement or glide from one vowel to another. There are eight diphthongs, divided into two groups – centring and closing. The centring ones end in ə and include ɪə, eə and ʊə. The closing ones are further divided into those ending in ɪ (eɪ, aɪ, ʊɪ) and ʊ (eʊ, aʊ). The first letter indicates the starting vowel and the second the direction of the glide. One of the most prominent features is the focus on the first part, which is always longer and stronger. Triphtongs are the most complex English vowels and they include a glide from one vowel to another followed by another glide uninterruptedly. They are formed by the closing diphthongs followed by schwa: eɪə, aɪə, ʊɪə, eʊə, and aʊə.[13]

Even ~~not~~ without counting the length feature, diphthongs, and schwa, English language has a number of vowel phonemes higher than average. But still, the characteristics of the English vowel system are corresponding to previously mentioned most common tendencies, with the one exception of non-~~in~~existence of an unrounded vowel resembling /ɒ/. [14]

2.1.2. Consonant Systems

Just like with vowel~~s~~ systems, consonant systems differ between languages as well. The number of consonants existing in languages varies from as few as eight up to more than eighty. Despite the differences, there are some recurring tendencies:

- All languages have stops, the most common being /p, t, k/. There are few languages lacking these, and not a single language lacks all three.
- The most commonly occurring fricative phoneme is /s/.
- Almost all languages have at last one nasal phoneme, the most common being /n/. If there are two nasal phonemes in a language, those are /n/ and /m/.
- Most languages have at least one phonemic liquid. For example, Japanese has only /r/ and Chinese only /l/.[15]

The English consonant system consists of 24 consonant phonemes shown in T~~the t~~able 1.[16] Based on the previously mentioned tendencies, the occurrence of the most frequent consonants in English is above-average, as it has all of the variants shown above.

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[13] Roach P. Work cited. pp. 14, 18, 20-23

[14] Steinbergs, A. Work cited. p. 376

[15] Steinbergs, A. Work cited. p. 379.

[16] Algeo,J. The Origins and Development of the English Language.// Boston: Wadsworth, Cengage Learning, 2010. p. 22

2.1.3. The Origin and Development of English Pronunciation and Spelling

As a language formed under the strong influence of other languages, both throughout the centuries during its development, and as a consequence of its present-day wide-spread nature, English has been constantly changing in all its aspects.

The changes of the English phonological system are closely connected to the changes of its writing system. The English writing system began during the late sixth century with the introduction of the Latin alphabet brought by Roman and Irish missionaries. Since Old English, a West Germanic language, contained sounds for which the Roman alphabet provided no letters, additional ones were introduced from the Germanic alphabet.[17] Some of the most important characteristics of the Old English phonology was the distinction between the long and short vowels, the transformation of long diphthongs into monophthongs, and the stress placed on the first syllable like in other Germanic languages.[18] During that time English had a phonemic orthography, meaning that the words were pronounced the way they were spelled. [19]

This began to change during the Middle English period. After the Norman Conquest in 1066 French was introduced as one of the country's languages, and so left its mark on the vocabulary and the spelling making it more similar to both Latin and French.[20] As far as the grammar of English is concerned, the most significant of all phonological developments in the language was the falling together of *a, o,* and *u* with *e* in unstressed syllables, all ultimately becoming [ə]. The levelled final e [ə] was gradually lost. Because of that, former characteristics of English like grammatical gender and noun inflection have disappeared. [21]

The early Modern English period was the time of great vocabulary expansion due to an increased connection with the rest of Europe, as well as with the rest of the world. It marked a turning point in the internal history of English, especially its pronunciation and spelling. During this period the language underwent phonological changes greater and more important than ever. The quality of all Middle English long vowels had changed but the spelling remained the same. Consequently, the phonological value of many letters of the English alphabet had changed drastically.[22] All the long vowels had shifted, as shown in F~~the f~~igure 4.[23]Another major influence on the English spelling had the Dutch, who were the leaders in the newly formed printing business

[17] Davidson, G., Upward C. The History of English Spelling. // Chichester: Wiley-Beckwell, 2011. p 20.

[18] Algeo,J. Work cited . p. 87
[19] Katamba, F. English words.//New York: Taylor & Francis e-Library, 2005. p. 86
[20] Algeo,J. Work cited. p. 116
[21] Algeo,J. Work cited. pp. 127-128
[22] Algeo,J. Work cited. p. 141
[23] Algeo,J. Work cited. pp. 144-145

and who introduced their spelling standards into English. As there was no centralized authorised body dealing with spelling, Modern English spelling ~~had~~ emerged by a slow process of increasing consensus among printers and lexicographers, reinforced by teachers, authors of literacy primers and published writers. [24]

In the Late Modern period (1800 – present) English has continued to change, which is no wonder considering it is the official language of many countries, as well as the language with the highest number of non-native speakers. As a consequence, various accents, dialects and pronunciation norms exist. For example, the manner of pronunciation in the American English, exists as the result of both the preservation of the British English before the settling in the New World [25] and the influence of various other nations due to the high ethical diversity of the U.S.

2.2. Morphological structure

The second feature through which languages are typologically classified – morphological structure – refers to the ways morphemes may or may not be combined to form words in a given language. Based on their differences when it comes to this feature, languages are divided into three major groups. Depending on the manner and extensiveness of the usage of bound morphemes, languages can be classified as isolating, polysynthetic, and synthetic. Owing to the large number and variety of languages, falling under a specific category is not a rule and is rarely, if at all, possible. Many languages, among which is English, exhibit characteristics pertaining to more than one group and are thus considered to be a mixed type. On the other hand, even languages that are considered to be accurate examples of certain types do not exhibit all the features characteristic of the group to which they belong.

2.2.1. The Isolating Type

Isolating languages can be seen as languages with no morphology, in the meaning that the words typically consist of a single root morpheme to which no affixes can be added. [26] An isolating language typically has a one-to-one correspondence between a morpheme and a word so every

[24] Davidson, G. Work cited. p. 21
[25] Algeo,J. Work cited. p. 186
[26] Comrie, B. Work cited. p. 43

morpheme is an independent word.[27] Because of the lack of bound morphemes almost all concepts are expressed through additional separate root morphemes. [28]

Isolating languages are often referred to as analytic languages and even though these terms are often used interchangeably, there is a difference between them. The defining feature of the analytic type of languages is the lack of complexity of grammatical words. In other words, the number of morphemes per word is extremely low and there are few, if any, bound morphemes indicating grammatical relations. [29]As it is also the trait of the isolating type, isolating languages tend to be analytic too, but this relation cannot be applied vice versa. In case of the isolating languages, this feature is extend even to the derivational morphemes. Also, isolating languages tend not to have obligatory grammatical categories such as tense and case or agreement of gender or number.[30]

Owing to the lack of internal complexity all grammatical distinctions, such as tense, number or case, are expressed by means other than inflectional morphemes, mostly by adding an unboud morpheme indicating particular grammatical category.[31] The expression of grammatical relations through unbound morphemes is shown in the example sentence in Vietnamese. In the sentence 'We bought the rice', plurality and past tense are indicated by unbound morphemes:

Chúng	tôi	mua	ã	g o
Pl.	I	buy	past	rice [32]

Words of isolating languages are usually very short – consisting of a single syllable, and sentences are formed as strings of such words. Being such, isolating languages require strict word order as in the absence of any morphological marking it would be difficult do properly convey the desired meaning without a secure structure frame which would enable a proper transfer of a message.

While all the characteristics of the isolating type are not present in any language, Chinese and Vietnamese are the most prominent isolating languages since a great portion of Chinese and Vietnamese words are both monosyllabic and monomorphemic.[33] Other languages belonging to this group are, for example, Thai, Cantonese, Laotian and Bulgarian.

[27] Aikhenvald Y., A. Typological distinctions in word-formation. // Language Typology and Syntactic Description/ T. Shopen (Ed.). New York: Cambridge University Press, 2007. p. 27

[28] Katamba,F. Work cited. p. 30
[29] Aikhenvald Y.A. Work cited. p. 5
[30] Aikhenvald Y.A. Work cited. p. 3
[31] Steinbergs, A. Work cited. p. 380
[32] Katamba, F. Work cited. p. 30
[33] Vajda, E.J. (2001). Typology.

Seeing as it has both derivational and inflectional morphemes, English is by no means considered to be an isolating type of language, but despite that English has many features related to analytic languages and can be considered such to a large extent. Due to the lack of inflectional suffixes, especially when compared to synthetic languages as it only has four (*-s*, *-ing*, *-ed*, and *-en*), a large portion of grammatical relations is expressed by function words and other separate words indicating certain grammatical functions. Owing to that, just like isolating languages, English is highly dependent on its syntactic features, the proof of which is the rarely omitted SVO word order.

2.2.2. The Polysynthetic Type

Polysynthetic languages, also called incorporating, are those whose words are comprised of a large number of morphemes, both roots and affixes.[34] As a result these languages are characterised by extreme internal complexity of grammatical words. [35]

Even though the terms polysynthetic and incorporating are often used interchangeably, the distinction should be made. Incorporation is a process similar to the process of compounding in the English language. It refers to the possibility of creation of new words by combining more lexical morphemes. Such process is rather common in English, with a number of examples of compound words such as *teacup* or *toothpaste*. However, this process is far more productive in polysynthetic languages, as the variety and number of roots combined in such languages exceeds the number possible in English language by far.[36] Polysynthetic refers to the incorporation of not only lexical but also grammatical morphemes into a single word. Based on that, incorporation is a term encompassed by the meaning of polysynthesis and can be considered its subtype.[37]

All grammatical features are expressed through affixes but the uniqueness of polysynthetic languages is that they allow not only a great number of grammatical and lexical morphemes to be combined but also different parts of speech. Implementation of words into words is possible and the resulting words may include all the necessary elements for conveying a message. Verbs, nouns, adjectives, all may be parts of a single word. Such words are extremely long and may carry the

[34] Steinbergs, A. Work cited. p. 380
[35] Aikhenvald Y.A. Work cited. p. 5
[36] Comrie, B. Work cited. p. 45
[37] Comrie, B. Work cited. p. 45

meaning of an entire sentence[38]. What would in other types of languages be expressed through additional lexemes, here is accomplishable through bound morphemes only.[39]

The following word from Inuktitut illustrates the complexity of polysynthetic words:

Qasuiirsarvigssarsingitluinarnarpuq

Qasu	-iir	-sar	-vig	-ssar	-si	-ngit	-luinar	-nar	-puq
tired	not	cause-to-be	place-for	suitable	find	not	completely	someone	3/sg

'Someone did not find a completely suitable resting place.[40]

As was the case with isolating languages, few languages are completely polysynthetic, those that are incorporating are even rarer. These types of languages are commonly found in the North America and include Eskimo, Inuktitut, Cree, Chukchi and Sarcee.[41]

Agglutinating languages somewhat resemble polysynthetic languages in the sense of involving a large number of suffixes and prefixes attached to the root morpheme. However, in the case of agglutinating languages the extent to which it can be applied is not as vast. Affixations in agglutinating languages result in words possibly carrying various grammatical relations, but not the meanings of entire sentences. Also, in the agglutinating languages added morphemes are easily identifiable, while in polysynthetic they are often fused together. [42]

Of all the language groups of morphological typology, this is the one English has the least in common. Not taking word formation processes like compounding into consideration, the similarities are uncertain as there is a great disparity when it comes to the extensiveness of usage of bound, especially inflectional, morphemes.

2.2.3. The Synthetic Type

Synthetic languages are those whose words are created by the combination of morphemes and the syntactic relationships within sentences are expressed through morphemes added to a certain root morpheme. Since the defining characteristic of such languages is the attachment of both derivational and inflectional morphemes to a root morpheme, they are in ~~the~~ contrast with the isolating or analytic languages where inflection, which is an elementary trait of the synthetic type, is impossible. Grammatical relations such as tense, person, gender, number, mood, voice, and case,

[38] Katamba,F. Work cited. p. 33
[39] Aikhenvald Y.A. Work cited. p. 5
[40] Steinbergs, A. Work cited. p. 380
[41] Steinbergs, A. Work cited. p. 380
[42] Katamba,F. Work cited. p. 31

are all expressed through a large variety of attached morphemes, both suffixes and prefixes. This method is applied with the lexical morphemes, too.

There are two ways through which this can be accomplished – through agglutination and fusion, and so two distinct types of synthetic languages exist – the agglutinating and the fusional (also called inflectional) type.

2.2.3.1. The Agglutinating Type

As previously mentioned, agglutinating languages involve a large number of suffixes and prefixes attached to the root morpheme as if they were glued together. This includes both derivational affixes allowing a large word formation productivity, and grammatical affixes used for denoting various grammatical relations. The specific trait which enables separate classification of such languages, especially concerning fusional languages, is the possibility of clear distinction between all components included in a word.[43] This is made possible by the two characteristics of the morphemes of the agglutinating languages - segmentability and invariance of morphemes. No matter which morpheme combination occurs each morpheme stays in its original form without any change in its spelling or pronunciation regardless of the context.[44] Based on a language's specified order affixes are set together to express numerous grammatical meanings in a single word. Each such identified part a word contains carries a specific meaning and denotes a single grammatical function.[45] Functions and segmentability of morphemes can be shown in the following example of a Hungarian word:

Macskáimat				
Macska	-i	-m	-at	
Cat	Pl.	my	Direct object	

As words may carry numerous affixes the resulting words are extremely morphologically complex. As a consequence, syntax does not hold as great importance as it does with languages whose morphology is not as complex since expressing a desired message can easily be accomplished through words alone without depending on the specific word order.

Some examples of the languages of this group are the Japanese, Korean, Uralic and Turkic group of languages.

Based on the fact that English has a large portion of analytic traits its inclusion in this group is obviously impossible. However, not belonging to any group, as previously mentioned, English has certain characteristics common with this type of language. As was the case with the

[43] Steinbergs, A. Work cited. p. 381
[44] Comrie, B. Work cited. p. 46
[45] Steinbergs, A. Work cited. p. 381

polysynthetic type, English allows a limited range of agglutination. Word formation processes like affixation or compounding involve the combination of morphemes resulting in words like, for example, *politeness* (polite + -ness) and sunflower (sun + flower). Even more complex words formed by affixation are possible like *reinforcement* which includes four morphemes, all of which are identifiable and have their meanings. [46]

However, there is a significant difference between English and the languages of this group as can be seen in the case of inflectional morphemes. The number of inflectional morphemes in English is incomparably smaller and the suffixation often involves changes in the root. For example, the common change of the ending *y* before the participle –ed, as in *multiplied* (multiply + -ed). Another major difference is the possibility of a single affix having different meanings, both when it comes to grammatical and lexical morphemes. The –*s* suffix can be both the indicator of plurality and the conjugational suffix for the third person singular, whereas in agglutinating languages there is only one possible meaning of a morpheme. A similar case occurs with the derivational morphemes. For example, the *en-* prefix has various meanings. With adjectives it means 'provide with a quality of', as in *en-rich* or *en-able*. When used with nouns it usually means 'enter into' or 'put into', as in *en-train*, *en-cage* or *en-chain.* [47]

As a side-effect of the absence of the morphological complexity present in agglutinating languages, English displays a great dependence on the syntax, which is another major difference which excludinges English from this group.

2.2.3.2. The Fusional Type

Similar to the agglutinating type, the fusional type also involves different grammatical morphemes attached to the stem whose function is to express various grammatical relations. The major difference between these two types is in the meanings such morphemes may carry. In the case of the agglutinating type clearly identifiable suffixes designating one specific grammatical relation line one after another. The number of grammatical relations expressed depends on the number of present suffixes. In the case of the fusional type, a single inflectional morpheme has the capacity to include more than one function, including grammatical and syntactic relations. Another important feature of fusional languages is, as the name says, that a stem and suffixes often fuse together making it impossible to clearly distinguish between them. It is also impossible to make a clear dividing line between the suffixes themselves or to discern which part of the suffixes

[46] Steinbergs, A. Work cited. p. 382
[47] Aikhenvald Y.A. Work cited. p. 36

indicates some particular grammatical relation.[48] For example, in the Croatian word *kuću* the –u suffix indicates feminine grammatical gender, singularity and the accusative case.

This group of languages is sometimes called the inflectional type since one of the major characteristics of it is a high degree of inflection. However, fusional is a more correct term since both conjugation and declension are present in the agglutinating type so it could also be seen as such.[49] When it comes to declension there are different variants for each case depending on the word's gender and number. Also, declension often varies with different words. In the case of conjugation a single suffix can express more than one grammatical feature including mood, voice, tense, aspect, person, gender and number.

Because they are morphologically rich, fusional languages often do not require strict word order, as well as the actual presence of the subject in a sentence since the verb in most cases already exhibits all the information necessary for the identification of it.

Some of the languages of this group are Latin, Greek, German, most Slavic languages and Romance languages.

Since English is a descendant language of some of the languages of this group, mainly German, it has some features of it. However, throughout the centuries it has lost many of its fusional characteristics that were once present and it is now closer to the analytic languages. One such thing would be the conjugation of verbs in English which was once similar to that of the fusional languages, and which is now reduced to the difference only in the third person singular, and first and third person singular of the verb *to be.* Despite that, some of the fusional features have remained, the most obvious case being pronoun forms. While nouns in English have only one case – genitive, *e.g. cat, cat's,* pronouns still have genitive and accusative forms: *e.g. he, his, him.*

2.2.4.. Mixed Types

Morphological typology and the characteristics of its groups are not something languages choose from in order to fit into a certain group. As languages evolve at the same time independently from other languages and under the influence of some languages due to their ~~presence~~close geographical or cultural contact, the possibility of being considered a pure example of any type of language is highly unlikely. Even the languages that are set as the most accurate examples of a given group in some cases vary from the group's norm so it is not unordinary to see

[48] Katamba,F. Work cited. p. 31
[49] Comrie, B. Work cited. p. 45

languages whose characteristics cannot be placed into any specific group. This is the case with English, which is not surprising considering it is formed as a combination of various other languages, which have, together with the gradual change over the time, left their mark not only on the vocabulary but also grammar.

2.2.4.1. English as the Mixed Type

As was already mentioned in the previous chapters, when it comes to morphological typology English has characteristics of more than one type and it is believed to be a mixture of analytic and synthetic language.

Because of its Germanic origin, the English language used to be highly synthetic. As such it had the common synthetic features like a high degree of inflection. Over the ages the language changed, but some of the synthetic characteristics remained:

- The existence of the inflectional morphemes *-s, -ed, -en, -ing*.
- The productivity of the word formation processes like affixation and compounding similar to that of the agglutinating languages.
  E.g. re-in-force-ment [50]
- As with the fusional languages, pronouns change their form depending on a case and a single morpheme may indicate person, number, gender and case.[51]
  E.g. pronoun *he*, third person singular, masculine, subject
  Genitive case: *his*
  Accusative case: *him*

Despite its roots, modern day English resembles the analytic languages more than the synthetic ones. Some analytic features of English are:

- The number of inflectional morphemes is insufficient for expressi~~on~~ng of the most of the grammatical relations through that means.
- Expression of grammatical relations through separate words in verbal forms.
  E.g. 'I will call you.' – The futurity is indicated by the free morpheme *will*. [52]
- Expression of grammatical relations through function words.
  E.g. My sister is *in* the house.
- Obligatory subject due to poor conjugation.

[50] Steinbergs, A. Work cited. p. 382
[51] Steinbergs, A. Work cited. p. 382
[52] Steinbergs, A. Work cited. p. 382

- High level of reliance on the syntax, especially word order.

2.3. Word order patterns

The third branch of grammar according to which languages are classified into certain language groups is syntax, and within syntax the discerning feature are word order patterns languages exhibit. While there are languages in which the word order is said to be free, this is not taken into consideration when it comes to typological classification. The reason for that is the existence of a specific word order even in such languages despite its lesser significance. The difference is that, in many cases, depending on the context or the stress of a sentence, the usual word order in the languages where it is not as important may be adjusted to express the desired meaning better.

Word order refers to the order of appearance of the function words, more specifically subject (S), verb (V), and direct object (O), in a declarative sentence. There are three most common patterns that are the case with almost all languages. These are SOV, SVO, and VSO. More than 95% of all world languages use one of these word order patterns.[53]

SOV is the most frequently used word order pattern. Some of the languages with this pattern are Turkish, Japanese and Tamil. Second most often used pattern, SVO, is used in English, Croatian, Hungarian, etc. The least used among these three - VSO - is present in languages like Arabic, Tongan, Welsh, etc.[54]

The common characteristic of all three is the precedence of subject over object. The remaining three possibilities – VOS, OVS, and OSV - are in that aspect opposite from the former three. While there is no real flaw in such word order, they are extremely rare and typically occur in relatively isolated areas.[55]

The English language is characterised by the fixed SVO word order. Since it is a language with a low range of inflection, function words and fixed word order carry some of the information that is in synthetic languages taken care of by inflection. Consequently, the specified word order is obligatory.[56]

[53] Steinbergs, A. Work cited. pp. 382-383
[54] Steinbergs, A. Work cited. p. 383
[55] Eifring, H., Theil R. //Linguistics for Students of Asian and African Languages: Chapter 4: Linguistic Typology.
[56] Eifring, H., Theil R. Work cited.

3. Conclusion

When it comes to all three linguistic branches mentioned – phonology, morphology and syntax – English exhibits traits such that it is comparable with other languages at least to a point.

Phonology, as a linguistic branch often regarded as the most difficult one when it comes to linguistic typology, offers little when it comes to the placement of English into certain group. However, based on the parameters of phonological typology English may be defined as a language with all of the most common phonological features.

As a language formed under the influence of many others, English exhibits traits such that its inclusion into one of the groups of morphological typology is~~t~~ impossible despite their number. Nevertheless, an approximate conclusion is possible to be reached. Based on its characteristics like the existence of bound grammatical and lexical morphemes it can be considered a synthetic language, at least to a point. On the other hand, the dependence on the unbound morphemes and syntax indicates its inclusion in the analytic group of languages, and so it is determined to be a mixed type – a combination of synthetic and analytic language.

Lastly, the English language is one of the languages with the most frequently used word order patterns – SVO. As a consequence of its analytic properties the English word order is strictly fixed. In the absence of all the grammatical morphemes necessary for accurate massage conveyance through that means only, syntax is one of the instruments English has to rely on.

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Sažetak

Jezična tipologija je grana lingvistike koja se bavi proučavanjem i klasifikacijom jezika temeljena na njihovim strukturnim i funkcionalnim osobinama. Te osobine uključuju fonološke, morfološke i sintaktičke osobine koje jezik pokazuje. Od fonoloških karakteristika jezici se proučavaju s obzirom na sustav samoglasnika i suglasnika te uz neke specifičnije osobie kao što su tonalitet i naglasak. Kako je jezike prilično teško kategorizirati samo na temelju njihovih fonoloških karakteristika, one su više deskriptivno nego tipološko oruđe. Morfološka tipologija nudi mnogo određeniji tišp kategorizacije jer se jezici dijele na tri različita jezična tipa sa svojim specifičnim osobinama. S obzirom na kombiniranje morfema u riječima i gramatičkim odnosima jezici se dijele na izolativne, polisintetičke i sintetičke jezike, koji se onda dijele na aglutinativne i fuzijske jezike. Postoje, međutim, jezici kao što je engleski koji, kako je pokazano, prikazuju osobine dvaju jezičnih tipova – analitičkog i sintetičkog. Treća promatrana razina jezičnog opisa je ona sintaktička koja jezike grupira na temelju reda riječi u rečenici ili na temelju mjesta koje u izjavnoj rečenici zauzimaju subjekt, glagol i object. Engleski pripada u skupinu s najčešćim redom riječi (SVO) i ima strogo određeni poredak sastavnica zbog svojih dominantnih analitičkih karakteristika.

Ključne riječi: lingvistička tipologija, izolativni jezici, polisintetički jezici, aglutinativni jezici, fuzijski jezici, engleski jezik

Tables and figures

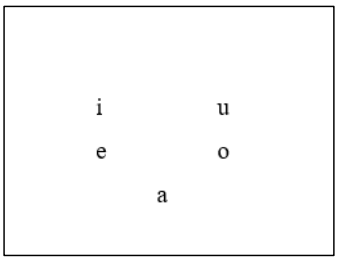


Figure 1 The most common vowel system

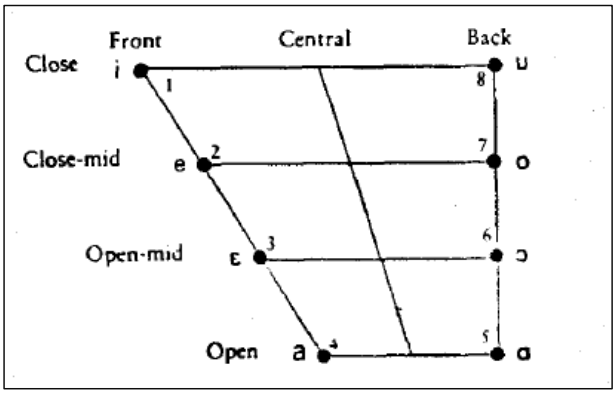


Figure 2 Primary cardinal vowels. This figure illustrates the extremes of the vowel range most familiar to the speakers of European languages.

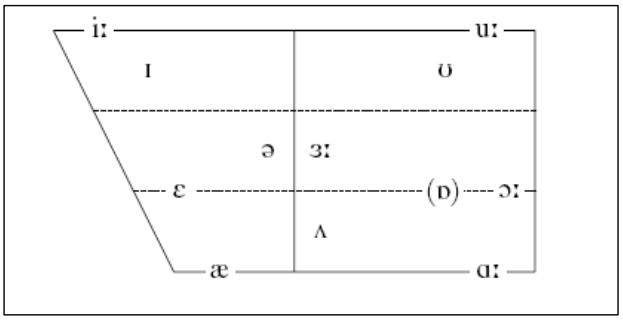


Figure 3 English monophthongs

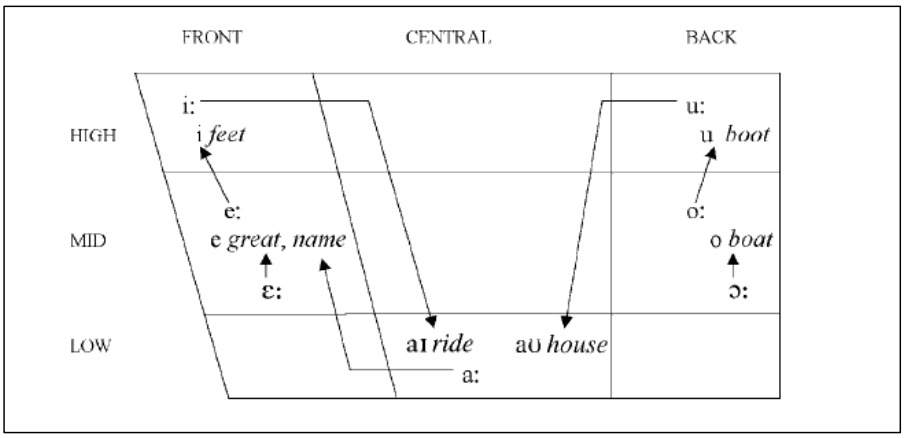


Figure 4 Great Vowel Shift. The change of the Old English vowels during the Middle English period.

		PLACE OF ARTICULATION							
		LABIAL		DENTAL			PALATOVELAR		GLOTTAL
		Bilabial	Labiodental	Interdental	Alveolar	Alveolo-palatal	Palatal	Velar	
Stops	voiceless	p (pup), p^h			t (tat), t^h		k (kick), k^h		
	voiced	b (bub), b^h			d (dad), d^h		g (gig), g^h		
Fricatives	voiceless		f (few)	θ (thigh)	s (seal)	š (shun)	ç	x	h (hoe)
	voiced	β	v (view)	ð (thy)	z (zeal)	ž (vision)		ɣ	
Affricates	voiceless					č (chug)			
	voiced					ǰ (jug)			
Nasals		m (mum)			n (nun)		ŋ (sing)		
Liquids	lateral				l (low)				
	retroflex				r (row)				
Semivowels							y (ye)	w (we)	

Table 1 English consonants