

<<语言学导论>>

图书基本信息

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内容概要

Linguistic science has developed very rapidly in the last few decades . Books on this subject number in hundreds . Courses in linguistic science are very common in colleges and universities in China . Students of foreign languages and literature are now required to take a variety of courses in linguistics. Linguistic science has a great influence on foreign language teaching and learning. No language teacher , especially no foreign language teacher , can escape linguistic theories and principles if he or she expects to do his or her teaching work effectively and on a scientific basis . There are some excellent introductions to linguistics published in recent fifty years in China , but most of them are written in Chinese. Besides , they are mostly concerned with the Chinese language. Being students of English , they should have not only some common knowledge of general linguistics , but also some linguistic knowledge of their target language . which , I am sure , will help them a lot with their further studies of English . AN INTRODUCTION TO LINGUISTICS is an attempt to meet the needs of Chinese students of English who wish to do their linguistic course work in their target language.

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章节摘录

Most of the languages mentioned above are living languages, which are still spoken as a medium of communication by the communities concerned. But there are some dead languages, which are no longer used as a general medium of spoken communication, such as Cornish, a Celtic language akin to Breton. A language dies when no children learn it as their mother tongue. This may come about in two ways: either all the speakers of the language are annihilated by some tragic event, say, a volcanic eruption, a war, or more commonly, assimilation that the speakers of the language are completely assimilated by another community that speaks a different language. The children, at first bilingual, grow up using the language of the dominant culture, and their children and children's children, fail to learn the old language, and so it dies. This is what has become of many American Indian languages. It is also true of the east branch of the subfamily of the Germanic languages. The Germanic language had, at first, three branches 2,000 years ago: the North Branch, the West branch and the East Branch. Latin is a dead language, because nobody speaks it as his mother tongue. With the disintegration of the Roman Empire, Latin gradually became a number of dialects, which later developed into independent languages: French, Italian,

Spanish, Portuguese, Romanian, Catalan and Provençal. From what we discussed above, though very briefly, we are now clear that most of the European languages are genetically related, and a genealogical or historical classification can be made accordingly. All the languages of the world can be similarly classified. As we know, most of the world languages do not belong to the Indo-European Language Family, linguists have also attempted to classify the non-European languages according to their genetic relationships, so as to identify the languages that constitute a family and the relationships that exist among those languages. But this work is far from completed.

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