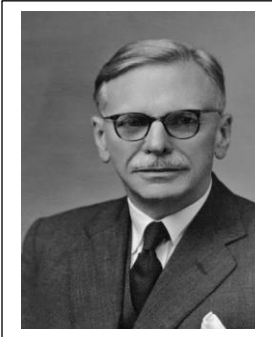


Unit one: Modern linguistics (European structuralism)

Lesson 04: London School of Linguistics



The London School of Linguistics is involved with the study of language on the descriptive plane (synchrony), the distinguishing of structural (syntagmatics) and systemic (paradigmatics) concepts, and the social aspects of language. Semantics is in the forefront.

The approach to language advocated by J.R. Firth during the 1950s. is now known as the **London School of linguistics**. Long before the distinction between semantics and pragmatics had been established, **Firth** argued for the primacy of the context of situation in the communication of meanings.

The school's primary contribution to linguistics has been the situational theory of meaning in semantics (the dependence of the meaning of a linguistic unit on its use in a standard context by a definite person; functional variations in speech are distinguished on the basis of typical contexts) and the prosodic analysis in phonology (the consideration of the phenomena accruing to a sound: the number and nature of syllables, the character of sound sequences, morpheme boundaries, stress, and so on).

