

This guide signposts towards key theorists whose work may be helpful for students to explore as part of the AS/ A Level English Language course. Please note that this guide is not exhaustive or prescriptive and schools may also want to look at theorists and theories not mentioned here.

This resource can be used in conjunction with OCR's Glossary of Terms and Main Language Theories : <http://www.ocr.org.uk/Images/308613-glossary-of-terms-and-main-language-theories.pdf>



Glossary

A

Aitchison, Jean

- labelling/packaging/network building – explored lexical acquisition and patterns/relationships (CLA)

B

Baker, Paul

- construction of sexuality and gender through language

Barthes, R

- semiotics, construction of meaning
- relationship between reader and writer; signifier and signified

Beattie, Geoffrey

- significance of interruptions (gender)

Berko, Jean

- Wug test, morphology, (CLA)

Bernstein, Basil

- restricted vs elaborated code; links between language and social class

Brown, Penelope

- pragmatics, face, politeness principle (with Levinson)

Brown, Roger

- syntax, morphology in relation to CLA

Bruner, Jerome

- emphasis on the social environment of children in supporting linguistic development (CLA)

C

Cameron, Deborah

- gender interaction
- challenges difference and deficit models

Cheshire, Jennifer

- non-grammatical forms, peer groups, dialect

Chomsky, Noam

- nativism/inbuilt capacity to develop speech 'programmed' into the human brain
- universal grammar (CLA)

Coates, Jennifer

- gender, oral culture, house talk**

Coulthard, M

- discourse analysis; classroom discourse
- IRF (Initiation-Response-Follow-up model (with Sinclair)

Crystal, David

- descriptivist/very influential contemporary linguist

D

Drew and Heritage

- occupational dialect; goal orientation; asymmetry; allowable contributions

Dyer, Gillian

- advertising; representation



E

Eckert, Penelope

- sociolinguistics, language and gender

F

Fairclough, Norman

- instrumental/influential power
- synthetic personalisation

Fox, Sue

- MLE; historical sociolinguistics

G

Giles, Howard

- accommodation theory; convergence; divergence

Githens, Susan

- gender styles; computer mediated communication

Goffman, Irving

- linguistic interaction; face

Grice, H P

- conversation theory; 'cooperative principle'
- conversational maxims

H

Halliday, Michael

- ideational metafunction; representation
- functions of language; children develop language because it serves specific purposes/functions for them

Holmes, Janet

- occupational dialect; small talk, compliments
- linguistic behaviour

K

Kerswill, Paul

- dialect levelling; language change

Koester, Almut

- importance of phatic talk in occupational dialect

L

Labov, William

- sociolinguistics, phonology, dialect and accent levelling

Lakoff, Robin

- dominance/deficit model (gender)

Leech, Geoffrey

- pragmatics, politeness, stylistics, grammar

Lenneberg, Eric

- proposed the idea of the critical period (up to approximately five years of age) – language acquisition becomes much harder if this has passed. (CLA)

Levinson, Steven

- pragmatics, face, politeness principle (with Brown)

M

Milroy, Lesley

- speech communities; closed and open networks

O

O'Barr, W and Atkins, B

- social status; context; gender; 'powerless language'
- courtroom discourse



P

Piaget, Jean

- cognitive development and its role in language acquisition
- LASS (Language Acquisition Support System)
- Role of caregivers in fostering language development, eg through providing scaffolding

Pinker, Steven

- language acquisition, focusing particularly on syntax, grammatical structures, semantics

S

Sapir-Whorf

- hypothesis advanced by Edward Sapir, later developed by Benjamin Whorf
- explores impact of a language's structure on perception
- linguistic relativity, determinism

Sebba, Mark

- Identity, bilingualism
- London Jamaican, creoles, pidgins

Sinclair, J

- discourse analysis; classroom discourse
- IRF (Initiation-Response-Follow-up model (with Coulthard)

Skinner, B F

- behaviourism, believed children learned by copying parents' speech and through positive reinforcement (CLA)

Spender, Dale

- genderlect; dominance; language as embedding and strengthening patriarchal values and structures

Swales, John

- Discourse community; the language of shared goals

T

Tannen, Deborah

- difference model of gendered language
- identifies a range of differences between male and female speech, for example focuses on concepts of status vs support

Tomasello, Michael

- Construction model of language acquisition; usage-based approach

Trudgill, Peter

- research into language, class and gender; saw women's speech as more socially aspirational
- dialect levelling

V

Vygotsky, Lev

- zone of proximal development - difference between the ability to perform tasks with and without guidance (CLA)

W

Wareing, Shân

- types of power; language, society, gender

Z

Zimmerman, Don and West, Candace

- gender; dominance model; interruption



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