

Dynamic Linguistics

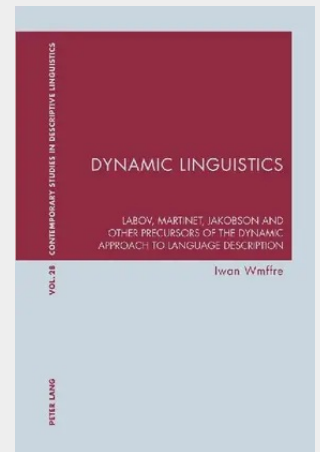
Labov, Martinet, Jakobson and other Precursors of the Dynamic Approach to Language Description

Analysis of language as a combination of both a structural and a lexical component overlooks a third all-encompassing aspect: dynamics. *Dynamic Linguistics* approaches the description of the complex phenomenon that is human language by focusing on this important but often neglected aspect.

This book charts the belated recognition of the importance of *dynamic synchrony* in twentieth-century linguistics and discusses two other key concepts in some detail: *speech community* and *language structure*. Because of their vital role in the development of a dynamic approach to linguistics, the three linguists William Labov, André Martinet and Roman Jakobson are featured, in particular Martinet in whose later writings – neglected in the English-speaking world – the fullest appreciation of the dynamics of language to date are found. A sustained attempt is also made to chronicle precursors, between the nineteenth century and the 1970s, who provided inspiration for these three scholars in the development of a dynamic approach to linguistic description and analysis.

The dynamic approach to linguistics is intended to help consolidate functional structuralists, geolinguists, sociolinguists and all other empirically minded linguists within a broader theoretical framework as well as playing a part in reversing the overformalism of the simplistic structuralist framework which has dominated, and continues to dominate, present-day linguistic description.

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