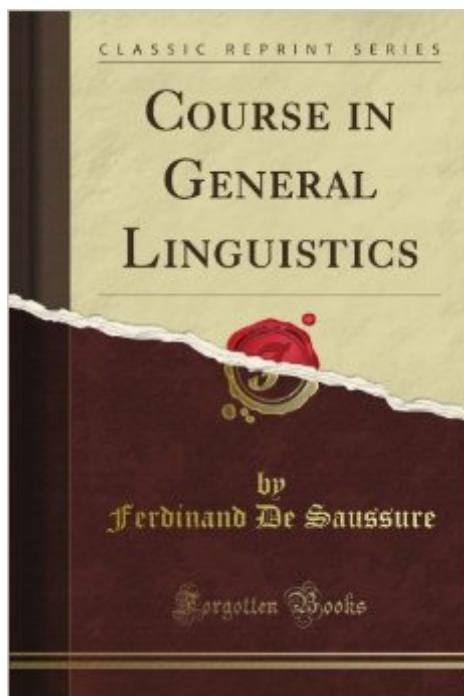


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Course In General Linguistics (Classic Reprint)



Synopsis

Few other figures in the history of the science of language have commanded such lasting respect and inspired such varied accomplishments as Ferdinand de Saussure. Leonard Bloomfield justly credited the eminent Swiss professor with providing a theoretic foundation to the newer trend in Linguistics study, and European scholars have seldom failed to consider his views when dealing with any theoretical problem. But the full implications of his teachings, for both static and evolutionary studies, have still to be elaborated. Saussure succeeded in impressing his individual stamp on almost everything within his reach. At the age of twenty, while still a student at Leipzig, he published his monumental treatise on the Proto-Indo-European vocalic system. This treatise, though based on theories and facts that were common property in his day, is still recognized as the most inspired and exhaustive treatment of the Proto-Indo-European vocalism. He studied under the neogrammarians Osthoff and Leskien, yet refuted their atomistic approach to linguistics in his attempt to frame a coherent science of linguistics. Despite the paucity of his publications (some 600 pages during his lifetime), Saussure's influence has been far-reaching. At Paris, where he taught Sanskrit for ten years (1881- 1891) and served as secretary of the Linguistic Society of Paris, his influence on the development of linguistics was decisive. His first-hand studies of Phrygian inscriptions and Lithuanian dialects may have been responsible for some of the qualities that subsequently endeared him to his students at the University of Geneva (1906-1911). His unique insight into the phenomenon of language brought to fruition the best of contemporary thinking and long years of patient investigation and penetrating thought. The dominant philosophical system of each age makes its imprint on each step in the evolution (Typographical errors above are due to OCR software and don't occur in the book.)

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Customer Reviews

Ferdinand de Saussure (1857-1913) was a Swiss linguist who was a landmark figure in the development of semiotics. [NOTE: page numbers below refer to the 236-page Open Court paperback edition.] He explained, "The aims of linguistics will be: (a) to describe all known languages and record their history. This involves tracing the history of language families and, as far as possible, reconstructing the parent language of each family; (b) to determine the forces operating permanently and universally in all languages, and to formulate general laws which account for all particular linguistic phenomena historically attested; (c) to delimit and define linguistics itself. Linguistics has very close connections with other sciences. Sometimes they provide linguistics with data and sometimes linguistics provides them with data. The boundaries between linguistics and its neighbouring sciences are not always clearly drawn. For example, linguistics must be clearly distinguished from ethnography and prehistory, both of them disciplines in which linguistic facts may be utilized as evidence. It must likewise be distinguished from anthropology — language is a social phenomenon. But ought linguistics on that account to be incorporated in sociology?" • (Introduction, Ch. II, pg. 6) He explains, "It is therefore possible to conceive of a science which studies the role of signs as part of social life. It would form part of social psychology, and hence of general psychology. We shall call it SEMIOLOGY (from the Greek *semeion*, "sign"). It would investigate the nature of signs and the laws governing them. Since it does not yet exist, one cannot say for certain that it will exist. But it has a right to exist, a place ready for it in advance." • (Ch. III, pg.

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