

TABLE OF CONTENTS

LIST OF TABLES	11
LIST OF FIGURES	11
ACKNOWLEDGMENTS	13
INTRODUCTION	15
CHAPTER 1	
Systems theory in contemporary philosophy: what constitutes a system?	23
1.1 On the 'systemic' approach	23
1.2 Bunge and Bocheński: basic premises concerning a system	28
1.3 Laszlo's theory of natural and cognitive systems	34
1.4 Conclusion	48
CHAPTER 2	
On the antinomy between structure and change: a historical perspective	51
2.1 What does structuralism impose on language?	51
2.2 Homogeneity of language system	56
2.3 Homogeneity of language in Paul's theory	60
2.4 Saussure's conception of language system	62
2.5 The structure-change antinomy and homogeneity of language system in post-Saussurean linguistics	67
2.6 Heterogeneity of language system: a resolution of the structure-change antinomy	75
2.7 Conclusion	92
CHAPTER 3	
The mechanism of sound change and the regularity controversy	95
3.1 On the importance of sound change	95
3.2 Paul's views on sound change	99

Table of contents

3.3	The regularity hypothesis in the twentieth-century linguistics	111
3.4	The diffusionist model of sound change	115
3.5	The regularity hypothesis and evidence from dialect geography	126
3.6	Evidence from changes in progress	136
3.7	Sound change in homonymic words	139
3.8	Evidence for lexical diffusion	143
3.9	Labov's proposal for resolution of the regularity controversy	146
3.10	Conclusion	150
CHAPTER 4		
	System, structure and function: on coordinated sound shifts and the functional view on language	153
4.1	Language structure and function: general remarks	153
4.2	Language structure and function in Martinet's theory	155
4.3	On chain shifts: evidence from historical and current sound changes	163
4.3.1	General principles and patterns of vowel shifts	163
4.3.2	The Great Vowel Shift (Pattern I): on the importance of peripherality factor in vowel shifts	167
4.3.3	Contemporary vowel shifts (Patterns II and III)	173
4.4	Chain shifts and maintaining the phonological structure: mergers and near-mergers	178
4.5	Functionalism and Labov's theory of language change: concluding remarks	181
CHAPTER 5		
	On the system's coherence and interdependence of elements: evidence from 'unsystematic' languages	187
5.1	Interdependence of language subsystems contrasted with the autonomous approach	187

Table of contents

5.2	The Kupwar case: syntactic convergence of three languages	192
5.3	The case of language 'mixing' in Mbugu	198
5.4	Pidgins and creoles: the problem of language origin and expansion	200
5.5	Conclusion	213
CHAPTER 6		
	How languages evolve in time	217
6.1	Is there a 'drift' in language?	217
6.2	Can language change be teleologically motivated?	226
6.3	On the cognitive conditioning of language change	235
6.4	The notion of economy in language	241
6.5	Redundancy, variation and the actuation of change	245
CHAPTER 7		
	Systems theory and the ontology of language: concluding remarks	251
BIBLIOGRAPHY		261
INDEX OF AUTHORS		281