

LINGUISTICS

An Introduction to Language and Communication

SEVENTH EDITION

Adrian **AKMAJIAN**

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LINGUISTICS

linguistics

An Introduction to Language and Communication
seventh edition

Adrian Akmajian, Ann K. Farmer, Lee Bickmore, Richard A. Demers, and Robert M. Harnish

This popular introductory linguistics text is unique for its integration of themes; rather than treat morphology, phonetics, phonology, syntax, and semantics as completely separate fields, the book shows how they interact. The authors provide a sound introduction to linguistic methodology, focusing on a set of linguistic concepts that are among the most fundamental within the field. By studying the topics in detail, students can get a feeling for how work in different areas of linguistics is done.

As in the last edition, part I covers the structural and interpretive parts of language—morphology, phonetics, phonology, syntax, semantics, variation, and change. Part II covers use and context of language and includes chapters on pragmatics, psychology of language, language acquisition, and language and the brain. This seventh edition has been extensively revised and updated; new material includes a chapter on computational linguistics, additional non-English examples, and a wide range of exercises, quizzes, and special topics. With this edition, *Linguistics* and content formerly included in *A Linguistics Workbook* are available as an interactive online textbook. New print copies of this book include a card affixed to the inside back cover with a unique access code for the interactive eTextbook. If you have a used copy of this book, you may purchase a digitally delivered access code separately via the Interactive eTextbook link at <http://mitpress.mit.edu/linguistics7>. If you purchased an ebook, you may obtain a unique access code by emailing digitalproducts-cs@mit.edu or calling 617-253-2889 or 800-207-8354 (toll-free in the U.S. and Canada).

eCourses, with homework and assessment tools, are available to instructors via the Interactive eTextbook link at <http://mitpress.mit.edu/linguistics7>, and may be used on their own or integrated with learning management systems.

The late Adrian Akmajian was Professor of Linguistics at the University of Arizona. Ann K. Farmer is an Information Engineer at Google. Lee Bickmore is a linguistic anthropologist and phonologist at the University at Albany, State University of New York. Richard A. Demers is Professor Emeritus of the Department of Linguistics at the University of Arizona. The late Robert M. Harnish was Professor Emeritus of Philosophy and Linguistics at the University of Arizona.

“There’s a good reason why this *Introduction* has been the standard for decades: it’s consistently inviting, informative, and intelligent. This edition, attuned to the twenty-first century, is the best one yet.”

—Steven Pinker, Johnstone Professor of Psychology, Harvard University; author of *The Language Instinct* and *The Sense of Style*

The MIT Press
Massachusetts Institute of Technology
Cambridge, Massachusetts 02142
<http://mitpress.mit.edu>

978-0-262-53326-3

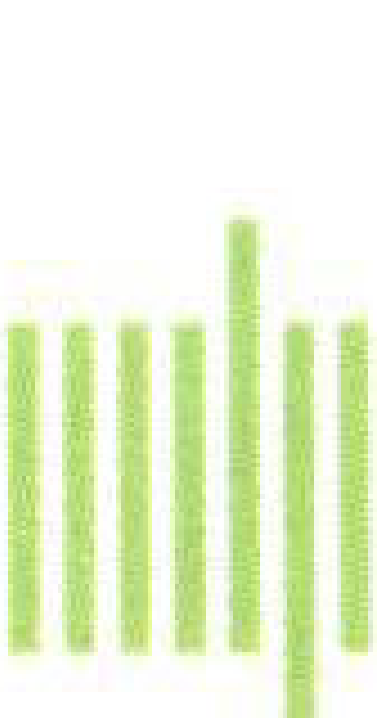


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The MIT Press
Cambridge, Massachusetts
London, England

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With this edition, *Linguistics* and content formerly included in *A Linguistics Workbook* are available as an interactive online textbook. New print copies of this book include a card affixed to the inside back cover with a unique access code for the interactive eTextbook. If you have a used copy of this book, you may purchase a digitally-delivered access code separately via the Interactive eTextbook link at <http://mitpress.mit.edu/linguistics7>. If you purchased an e-book, you may obtain a unique access code by emailing: digitalproducts-cs@mit.edu or calling 617-253-2889 or 800-207-8354 (toll-free in the U.S. and Canada).

This book was set in Times Roman 10 on 13 pt by Toppan Best-set Premedia Limited, Hong Kong. Printed and bound in the United States of America.

Library of Congress Cataloging-in-Publication Data

Names: Akmajian, Adrian, author. | Farmer, Ann Kathleen, author. | Bickmore, Lee, 1961- author. | Demers, Richard A., author. | Harnish, Robert M., author.

Title: *Linguistics : an introduction to language and communication* / Adrian Akmajian, Ann K. Farmer, Lee Bickmore, Richard A. Demers, and Robert M. Harnish.

Description: Seventh edition. | Cambridge, MA : The MIT Press, [2017] | Includes bibliographical references and index.

Identifiers: LCCN 2016038293 | ISBN 9780262533263 (pbk. : alk. paper)

Subjects: LCSH: Linguistics.

Classification: LCC P121 .A4384 2017 | DDC 410--dc23 LC record available at <https://lccn.loc.gov/2016038293>

10 9 8 7 6 5 4 3 2 1

Acknowledgments

For this seventh edition we would like to thank Richard Sproat (Special Topic: Computational Linguistics), Kathryn Bayles (for writing the original, first-edition versions of sections 12.1–12.3), Marc Lowenthal, Marie Lufkin Lee, Luz Yvana Mejia (Quechua), Aaron Broadwell (Copala Trique), Alfred Sikazwe (Cilungu), Nancy Kula (Bemba), Barbara Balinda (Rutooro), John Justeson (writing systems), Craig Cornelius (Navajo keyboard), Laurie Grace (figure 8.6), Don Garber (permission to use table 12.3), Dan Meltz for his “misheard” contribution to chapter 10, and Jonni Kanerva (feedback on chapter 6). A huge thanks to Nick Farmer for his extensive input on chapters 7, 8, and 12, and his contribution of the exercises on Quechua and Hindi. Finally, thanks to Anne Mark, for her editing skills and excellent feedback during the preparation of the manuscript.

Note to the Teacher

This seventh edition of our text evolved from continuing classroom and industry experience, and valuable feedback from students and colleagues.

Like the sixth edition, this one is divided into two parts. Part I deals with the structural and interpretive parts of language: morphology, phonetics, phonology, syntax, semantics, variation, and change. Part II deals with use and context of language and includes chapters on pragmatics, psychology of language, language acquisition, and language and the brain.

In this edition most of the chapters have been either updated or revised. Several include special topics of particular interest, which are set off at the end of the chapter or added to the enhanced digital edition of the book. Chapter 2, “Morphology,” stresses the creative aspect of English vocabulary (or the vocabulary of any language, for that matter). The primary transcription system used in chapter 3, “Phonetics and Phonemic Transcription”—indeed, throughout the book—remains the International Phonetic Alphabet, although other commonly used transcription systems are also provided. Chapter 4, “Phonology,” discusses the organizing segmental and prosodic properties of the sound structure of language, with a focus on how the phonetic string is derived from a more basic underlying form. Chapter 5, “Syntax,” introduces ways to examine properties of the syntax of human language. Chapter 6, “Semantics,” explores accounts of what linguistic units mean, and what they are used to talk about. Chapter 7, “Language Variation,” looks at language styles and dialects, and at the difficulty of defining *dialect* and *language*. Chapter 8, “Language Change,” covers speculations about the origin of human language, and the nature of language change. Chapter 9, “Pragmatics,” investigates how language is *used* by humans to communicate. Chapter 10, “Psychology of Language,” examines how language is represented in the mind/brain. Chapter 11, “Language Acquisition in Children,” explores how children can acquire such a complex system as language. Chapter 12, “Language and the Brain,” addresses the question, How is language realized in the brain?

Despite the revisions we have made throughout, certain aspects of the text remain unchanged. First, as in earlier editions, the chapter on morphology appears before the chapters on phonetics and phonology. Though this is not the “traditional” order of presentation, we have found it desirable for two reasons. First, it enables us to introduce students to the various fields of linguistics by virtue of the information encoded in words. And second, words and their properties are intuitively accessible to students in a way that sounds and their properties may not be.

Second, we must emphasize once again our concern with imparting basic conceptual foundations of linguistics and the method of argumentation, justification, and hypothesis testing within the field. In no way is this edition intended to be a complete survey of the facts or putative results that have occupied linguists in recent years. On the contrary, we have chosen a small set of linguistic concepts that we understand to be among the most fundamental within the field; and in presenting these concepts, we have attempted to show how to argue for linguistic hypotheses. By dealing with a relatively small number of topics in detail, students can get a feeling for how work in different areas of linguistics is done. If an introductory course can impart this feeling for the field, it will have largely succeeded.

Third, while we draw on English examples to lay the foundation in each chapter, in this edition we build and expand on this foundation with non-English examples and data taken from languages found in all parts of the globe. This shift from previous editions recognizes the importance of studying language universals and the increasingly significant role that comparative studies play in linguistic research. Of course, English has a special role as the only language that all the students using this text have in common, and because of this it is, appropriately, used extensively to exemplify points of language structure and use. In presenting conceptual foundations of linguistics to students who have never been exposed to the subject before, we feel it is crucial that they should be able to draw upon their linguistic intuitions when required to make subtle judgments about language, both in following the text and in doing exercises. This is not merely for convenience, to set up as few obstacles as possible in an introductory course; rather, we feel it is essential that students be able to evaluate critically our factual claims at each step, for this encourages a healthy skepticism and an active approach toward the subject matter.

Fourth, we have now made extensive materials available in an enhanced digital edition to expand and enrich the student’s understanding of linguistics:

- all the exercises and appendixes from *A Linguistics Workbook: Companion to Linguistics, Sixth Edition*;
- new exercises that add to this growing corpus representing diverse languages of the world;
- Special Topic sections designed to dig deeper into material in the text or to introduce more advanced subjects (including a major new section addressing the relevance of linguistic theories to applied models of natural language and speech processing);
- topic-relevant videos;
- a 10-question quiz for each chapter.

LESSON PLANS

We have organized this book to give teachers maximum flexibility in designing a linguistics course for their own (and their students' own) needs. The individual chapters are designed with numerous subsections and in such a way that core material is often presented first, with additional material following as special topics. In this way, teachers who can spend only a week on a certain chapter are able to choose various subsections, so that students are exposed to the material most relevant for that particular course—in short, the book can be used in a modular fashion. We will take up some specific examples.

For teachers working in the quarter system, this book can be used easily for a one-quarter course. For a course oriented toward more traditional topics in linguistics, the following is a possible format (with variations depending on the teacher):

- Chapter 2: Morphology
- Chapter 3: Phonetics and Phonemic Transcription
- Chapter 4: Phonology
- Chapter 5: Syntax
- Chapter 7: Language Variation
- Chapter 8: Language Change

The chapters cited do not depend crucially on the ones that have been skipped over; thus, we have ensured that a traditional core exists within the book.

For a one-quarter course with an emphasis on psycholinguistics, cognitive science, or human communication, the following is a possible format:

- Chapter 2: Morphology
- Chapter 5: Syntax
- Chapter 6: Semantics

Chapter 9: Pragmatics

Chapter 11: Language Acquisition in Children

Teachers working within the semester system (or teaching courses that run two quarters in the quarter system) will find that the book can be used quite comfortably within a 14- or 15-week term. For example, for a one-semester linguistics course oriented toward more traditional topics, the following is a possible format:

Chapter 2: Morphology

Chapter 3: Phonetics and Phonemic Transcription

Chapter 4: Phonology

Chapter 5: Syntax

Chapter 6: Semantics

Chapter 7: Language Variation

Chapter 8: Language Change

Chapter 9: Pragmatics

Obviously, teachers with other interests will pick different modules. For example, for a course with a psycholinguistic, cognitive science, or human communication orientation, the following choice of topics seems reasonable:

Chapter 2: Morphology

Chapter 5: Syntax

Chapter 6: Semantics

Chapter 9: Pragmatics

Chapter 10: Psychology of Language

Chapter 11: Language Acquisition in Children

Chapter 12: Language and the Brain

In short, by varying the selection of chapters, subsections, and special topics, teachers from diverse backgrounds and with diverse goals will be able to tailor an effective introduction to linguistics that meets their students' needs.

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