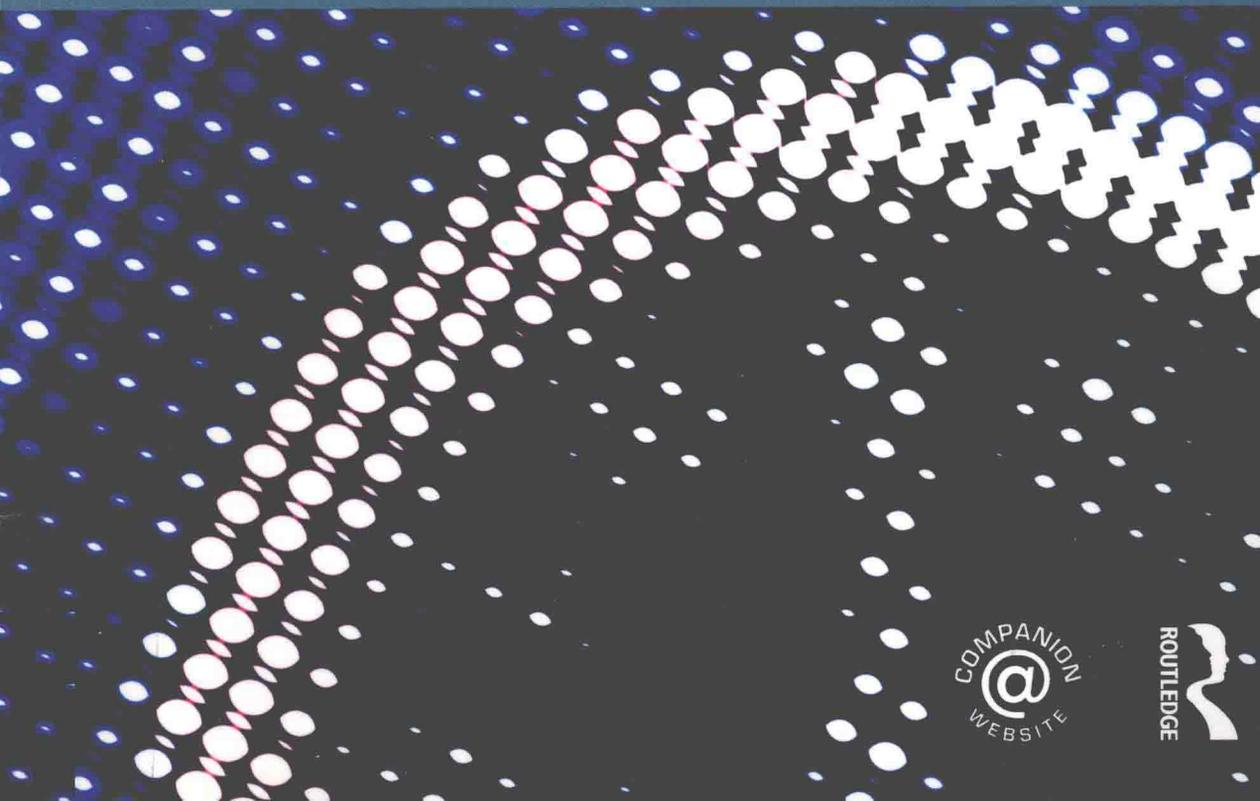




Edited by Susan J. Behrens and Judith A. Parker

LANGUAGE IN THE REAL WORLD

An introduction to linguistics



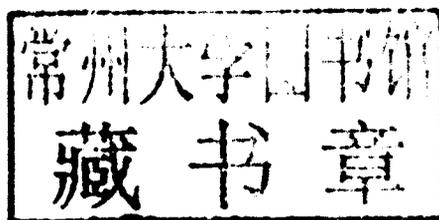
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LANGUAGE IN THE REAL WORLD

An introduction to linguistics

SUSAN J. BEHRENS AND JUDITH A. PARKER



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Language in the Real World: An introduction to linguistics challenges the traditional approaches taken to linguistics to provide an innovative introduction to the subject. By first examining the real world applications of core areas of linguistics and then addressing the theory behind these applications, this text offers an inductive, illustrative, and interactive overview for students. Key areas covered include animal communication, phonology, language variation, gender and power, lexicography, translation, forensic linguistics, language acquisition, American Sign Language, and language disorders. Each chapter, written by an expert in the field, is introduced by boxed notes listing the key points covered and features an author's note to readers that situates the chapter in its real world context. Activities and pointers for further study and reading are also integrated into the chapters and an end of text glossary is provided to aid study.

Professors and students will benefit from the interactive companion website that includes a student section featuring comments and hints on the chapter exercises within the book, a series of flash cards to test knowledge, and further reading and links to key resources. Material for professors includes essay and multi-choice questions based on each chapter and additional general discussion topics.

Language in the Real World shows that linguistics can be appreciated, studied, and enjoyed by actively engaging real world applications of linguistic knowledge and principles and will be essential reading for students with an interest in language.

Susan J. Behrens is Professor of Speech–Language Pathology and Audiology at Marymount Manhattan College.

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SB: To Tony, of course

JP: For Gladys B. Parker, my beautiful mother

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INTRODUCTION

Language in the Real World: An introduction to linguistics is a different kind of book. It approaches linguistics by examining how the various branches of the discipline are put to use in the real world. This book offers an introduction to the traditional areas of linguistics and linguistic analysis in an inductive, illustrative, and interactive way by examining and telling stories about real world applications. This text conveys the immediacy and enjoyment of reading about and studying linguistics and conducting research into language. The book's tone is one of discovery as readers become more linguistically aware as they work through the chapters.

Most traditional linguistics texts first lead students through linguistic theory, with applications relegated to the final few chapters. Many of these texts reflect a belief that theory must precede application and inform the work of beginning linguistics study. Other texts that focus on the application of linguistics seem narrow in scope, often directed to the specific needs of a different population: teachers of English as a Second or Foreign Language. Our text challenges these beliefs and practices. From our experiences in the classroom, and commitment to student-centered, authentic tools for learning, we have developed a text that takes a more inductive approach to uncovering linguistic phenomena. Readers do indeed encounter linguistic theory, but they do so in ways that embed theory in everyday phenomena.

In some courses, this textbook will stand on its own, satisfying the needs to engage students in metalinguistic study and the examination of linguistics. The book will serve well, and be especially exciting to, students new to linguistics, with its richly varied chapters covering introductory and more advanced levels; its helpful interactive exercises; and the resources both in the book and on the book's companion website. Linguistics professors might also choose to use one of the many fine traditionally oriented texts on the market in conjunction with our text to help students connect real world events and issues with the many facets of language study.

One of the strengths of this book is the variety of approaches to the study of language. Each part has a broad introductory chapter followed by chapters that narrow in focus. While broader chapters provide an overview to readers, other chapters present a particular aspect of a field of linguistics. No text covers everything; our chapters are carefully chosen and arranged to give readers many flavors of what the title promises: language in the real world.

In addition, each chapter is written by a scholar or group of scholars who share their experiences of linguistics. While this format offers readers a variety of voices across chapters, we (the editors) have worked to ensure a consistency of level and style to make the reader's experience of the book smooth.

WHO THIS BOOK IS FOR

Our book aims to reach two main types of readers: students studying the discipline of linguistics and those in related fields that are informed by language issues. Readers might encounter this book because they have chosen Linguistics as a major or minor. Then

again, they might be engrossed in a subject that intersects with the material in this text—language in its real world applications—and yet might not have taken a traditional linguistics course. Readers might be English majors, Modern Language majors, Philosophy majors, or Performing Arts majors who are interested in language in its spoken and written forms; or studying Psychology, Sociology, or Anthropology: the sciences of our species. All these areas are informed by language and constructed through the application of language. As a discipline that touches on so many other fields of study, and has so many manifestations in human interaction, linguistics should be introduced to students as a real world phenomenon.

Specifically, this text will benefit students studying the following areas:

- 1 Linguistics
- 2 General Education/Liberal Arts and Sciences
- 3 Composition
- 4 Communication Arts and Theory
- 5 Education
- 6 English language
- 7 English literature
- 8 Foreign languages
- 9 Philosophy
- 10 Gender Studies
- 11 Performing Arts
- 12 Social sciences
- 13 Psychology
- 14 Communication Sciences and Disorders

We, the editors, each have over 20 years of teaching experience. We have seen again and again that most students get excited about linguistics when they can relate it to daily encounters and when they explore linguistic knowledge and principles through real world applications. Our philosophy is that linguistics can be appreciated, studied, and enjoyed by actively engaging in real world applications of linguistic knowledge and principles.

WHAT READERS LEARN FROM THIS BOOK

The lessons readers will be engaged in when they work with this book are two-fold. There is the discovery of linguistics, a discipline devoted to uncovering how language is structured and used to communicate meaning. But this book goes beyond what is already available in linguistics texts; its other lesson is that language is everywhere, and we all benefit from a keener awareness of language and its application. And while a reader might be immersed primarily in one discipline, he or she will benefit from a more comprehensive look at language applications in many areas.

This text covers up-to-date issues of language and its applications, as seen from the viewpoint of our many contributors. To take just a few examples, readers will learn about how linguistics applies to crime work in forensics; how the novels of Toni Morrison offer a linguistic view of our culture; what autism is and how the notion of the autistic spectrum evolved; what is beneficial and frustrating about machine translation software; and how linguistic analysis reveals the power dynamics of telling sexual assault narratives in different contexts.

HOW TO READ THIS BOOK

Organization of the Text

The length of the text is designed for a single semester's course of study. The order of chapters takes the reader thematically through the various applications of linguistics; furthermore, each part leads off with a chapter that is broader in scope than its companions, with the subsequent chapters in that section focusing in more detail on another aspect of the theme of that section. Given this design, readers can get an overview of related areas in linguistics by choosing to read initial chapters in each part, and then going back to explore the rest of the part in more depth.

Since our book is designed to inform readers in various areas of study, we supplement our table of contents with one that lists the traditional areas of linguistics (phonology, morphology, semantics, syntax, and discourse) and the chapters that cover these areas in some depth. In addition, our chapters use examples from many languages other than English, including American Sign Language (ASL).

The parts are organized in such a way that readers first encounter a real world phenomenon they all share: being in school, especially in a new century of globalization and diverse communities (Part I: "Language, Education, and Cultural Change"). The book next presents another section of real world language use familiar to students: books! In this case, dictionaries, novels, and how translators work (Part II: "Literature, Translation, and Computers"). From there, the textbook goes into more specialized aspects of language use. In Part III ("Language, Power, and Identity"), we read about language analysis and what it reveals about the language user in different social contexts. Part IV ("Forms of Language Communication") turns to what different communication forms look like, in young children, users of a signed language, and even in honey bees. We end with Part V ("Language and Communication Science"), the most specialized section of the text, exploring communication science as it assesses language development, disorders and differences. Yet even in Part V, readers from many disciplines will benefit from examining language in its clinical applications.

Organization of the Parts

Part I, "Language, Education, and Cultural Change," takes readers into the classroom and examines attitudes towards language diversity by college students and teachers (Chapter 1). Emotions that arise from language differences across cultures are next explored (Chapter 2). Part I ends with a look into the philosophy and phonological training of a teacher of pronunciation to both English as a Second Language (ESL) students and native language learners (Chapter 3).

Part II, "Literature, Translation, and Computers," starts with an exploration of something very familiar to college students, the dictionary, and uncovers new connections between such a reference tool and human language, specifically how dictionaries preserve and document linguistic trends (Chapter 4). We then look at how translators work, both the human and the machine type (Chapter 5 and Chapter 6). Part II finishes with a discussion of potentially inflammatory, transgressive language in literature, focusing on Toni Morrison (Chapter 7).

In Part III, "Language, Power, and Identity," we turn to how linguistics is used to explore ourselves and our identity, with chapters on the language and benefits of telling sexual assault narratives (Chapter 8); a look at naming practices specific to gender (Chapter 9); and a discussion of the legal applications of linguistics, in a chapter on linguistics as a forensic science (Chapter 10).