



**BOOK REVIEW OF AN INTRODUCTION TO APPLIED LINGUISTICS
EDITED BY NORBER SCHMITT AND MICHAEL P.H. RODGERS**

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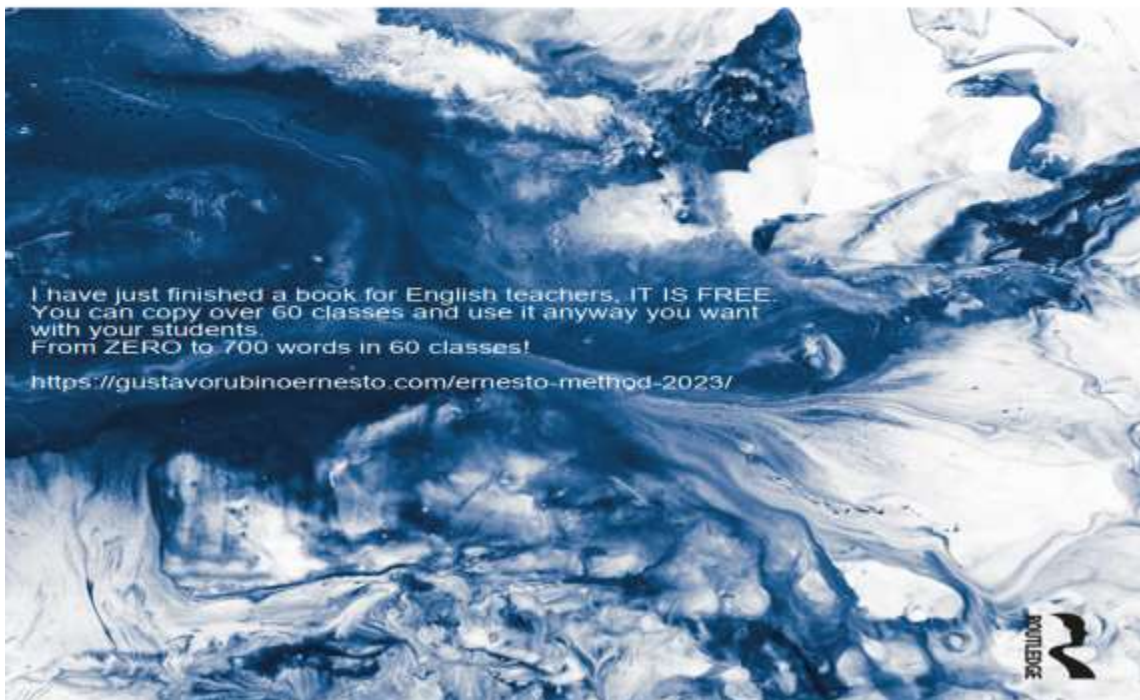
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Third Edition

AN INTRODUCTION TO
Applied Linguistics

Edited by Norbert Schmitt
and Michael P.H. Rodgers





Abstract

An Introduction to Applied Linguistics, edited by Norbert Schmitt and Michael P. H. Rodgers, presents a comprehensive yet accessible overview of the field of applied linguistics. The book systematically introduces key areas such as language learning, teaching, assessment, and research methods. It effectively bridges linguistic theory with practical applications in real-world contexts. The contributions from leading scholars enhance the book's academic value and clarity. Overall, the volume serves as a valuable introductory resource for students, teachers, and researchers in applied linguistics.

This book captures the core of applied linguistics, both the theorization and the practiced. Authors take a huge swath of territory, covering second language acquisition, sociolinguistics, discourse analysis, and language pedagogy. Taking a rather unique approach, Schmitt and Rodgers attempt to close the theory/practice gap by showing how applied linguistics, in a practical sense, contributes to language education, policy, and communication. A valuable contribution for anyone interested in the role that language plays in today's socially, and educationally diverse, context, the book serves as a guide to the most pertinent issues of today.

In considering the language system authors focus on grammar and vocabulary. They explain the importance of not just knowledge and competence, but the manner in which a person's level of fluency is increased by the knowledge of a greater range of language. It is the most recent developments on the subject of grammar, especially on whether it is to be taught overtly, or whether acquisition comes naturally, that this chapter addresses. The importance of lexis, both in terms of breadth and depth, in communication is reviewed. This enables these sections to have a good theoretical grounding and provides the practical aspect of teaching a language.

The purpose of discourse analysis and pragmatics is to demonstrate that meaning goes beyond single words and single sentences. When referring to social context and social discourse analysis, Schmitt and Rodgers describe how social situational variables and social respondents can be the subject of peripheral analysis. Pragmatics, and the meaning of context, is the discipline that examines how the context organizes the communication, how the speaker is able to achieve particular communicative goals, and how the listener is able to interpret the meaning of communication. This portion of the text offers a starting point for the provision of the means of analyzing the use of language on the level of interaction, which is of particular importance to the practitioners of language teaching, translation, and sociolinguistics.

The authors finish the final section of the book by introducing the readers to what corpus linguistics is and what Schmitt and Rodgers believe to be its most important function: the provision of data that can be used to empirically assess language phenomena for the purpose of determining the patterns and trends relevant to the subject of analysis. Schmitt and Rodgers explain the impact of corpora (the plural of corpus and is a term used to refer to a collection of written or spoken texts) on the discipline of applied linguistics and its ability to provide structure within the analysis of language used in real-life situations. This section of the text is meant to demonstrate how teaching language, building dictionaries, and creating numerous other works can be enhanced and better informed by the use corpus data.

An Introduction to Applied Linguistics serves as an excellent enhancement for students, merging knowledge and theory from the real world. Each sub-section is constructed to introduce the readers to the core concepts, making the chapter an indispensable starting point for students and



practitioners. Schmitt and Rodgers outline-and-illustrate the areas pertaining to and contributing to applied linguistics, providing, and inspiring to many, an overall synopsis of discussion, further appreciation and investigation of language structure, use, and teaching.

The book also covers language acquisition, psycholinguistics, sociolinguistics, and the different individual learner's theory and perspective to create an interdisciplinary and multidimensional foundation to various elements pertaining to and influencing language learning. The book also covers from the cognitive and social dimensions of language acquisition to what is supposed to be facilitated and/or hindered and to the elements of the language learners that should be social-attributes.

Accompanying the fundamentals of each language acquisition theory including the Input Hypothesis, Interaction Hypothesis, and the Output Hypothesis, the chapter starts with the SLA. Knowledge acquisition through comprehensible input, interaction, and language production is discussed by Schmitt and Rodgers. The authors include age and the critical period, as well as the individual differences that contribute to the varying levels of success with regard to the acquisition of a language. These elements together offer a primary theoretical framework with the aim to understand the multifaceted and complex nature of the SLA.

Cognitive framework of language acquisition deals with the mechanisms that involve the processing, storage, and retrieval of a language. The authors reviewed the language mental representations, processes of language comprehension and production, and the roles of cognitive load and working memory on the efficiency of learning a language. The chapter analyzes the bilingual language processing and psycholinguistic studies that help to design tasks within the framework of task-based learning architecture that suits the cognitive level of the learners.

The sociolinguistics section analyzes how social contexts interact with language, including how social contexts and variables such as ethnicity, gender, and class affect how language is learned and used. Schmitt and Rodgers discuss the idea of language as a social instrument that is organized and controlled by culture. Schmitt and Rodgers emphasize that teaching and learning a language socioculturally is as important as a sociocultural analysis of the language. They explain the importance of having, and being able to demonstrate, sociolinguistic competence as the ability to use language in a socially appropriate manner in order to function in a community.

The book explores the personal attributes of the language learner such as their preferred learning style, strategy, and their individual level of motivation. As Schmitt and Rodgers explain, learning styles, such as visual, auditory, and kinesthetic, affect how learners engage with the material as well as their ability to understand it. They also discuss language learning strategies, both cognitive and metacognitive, and the role of self-regulated learning. Furthermore, the section covers motivation, including both instrumental and integrative motivation as well as motivation that can support or inhibit motivation over time, as it relates to language achievement.

Further the book successfully combines the cognitive, social, and individual dimensions of language learning, providing a well-rounded perspective of language acquisition. This chapter studies all the factors that influence learning a language from psycholinguistics to the language of the learner to the language itself to the language acquisition. Because of the ideal proportion of theory and practice, this chapter is useful to both beginners and experts. Because of the learner's cognitive and social surroundings, Schmitt and Rogers add to the completeness of the chapter.



The authors, concentrating on the reading section, advocate for the view that reading is not merely a matter of decoding, but a matter of comprehension and meaning construction. Also addressed in the reading section are the various dimensions of reading like is discussed in Schmitt and Rodgers, including the vocabulary and background knowledge necessary for optimizing the various dimensions of reading like (1) skimming, (2) scanning, and (3) intensive reading. As for reading pedagogy, the authors recommend encouraging students to read extensively and argue that reading in the target language will result in greater fluency and accuracy in the language, in addition to improved vocabulary and comprehension, and overall greater reading and comprehension skills.

In laying out their arguments about writing, Schmitt and Rodgers see it as a productive skill that involves order, consistency, and accuracy. Here too the authors focus on the students' difficulties; in this case, the authors focus on the challenges language students face in the areas of grammar, syntax, and the overall rhetorical arrangement of their writing and the process of writing which includes: (1) planning, (2) drafting, (3) revising, and (4) editing. Other aspects discussed by the authors include genre and audience constraints and their suggestions of process writing, including peer review, as viable instructional practices continue to remain relevant.

The section on assessment in this chapter is concerned with different ways of testing and evaluation that can be used to determine proficiency in each skill area. Schmitt and Rodgers discuss key assessment principles: reliability, validity, and practicality. They also describe formative vs, summative assessment. They argue that assessments should fit the learning goals and objectives. They should also be multiple and reflect the actual use of the language so that a real authentic assessment can be made of learners' proficiency.

In short, Schmitt and Rodgers attempt to describe in a balanced and practical manner some of the fundamental language skills by describing in detail some of the instructional practices and assessment strategies that can be useful for language teachers as well as language learners. By considering some of the specific difficulties found in each of the skills, and providing real examples of classroom activities that can be used to teach these skills, Schmitt and Rodgers make the chapter very practical. The activities provided in this chapter, as well as the suggestions of real classroom activities that integrate different skills, make the chapter a practical and useful chapter for teachers who want to promote the development of language in an integrated manner and who want to promote balanced development of language skills in their students.



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