



Schmitt, N., & Rodgers, M. P. H. (Eds.)
***An Introduction to Applied Linguistics* (3rd ed.)**
Routledge, Taylor & Francis. 2020. 404 pp.

Since the term applied linguistics was coined in the 1950s (Davies, 1999), various books published henceforth have concurred that applied linguistics can be regarded as the academic discipline that looks at the knowledge about language and how it is used to make decisions in a real-life context (Simpson et al., 2019). One of these books is by Schmitt and Rodgers, a multifarious work divided into 18 chapters that come in three key parts. The book sheds additional light on the various concepts and constructs regarding applied linguistics, considering the recent developments in the subject area.

The preface of the book is arguably the most noticeable component, written by Marianne Celce-Murcia and Norbert Schmitt, and discusses an overview of applied linguistics simplifying the definition of the subject. The preface traces the development of the subject area from the 1700s to the 20th century, and its subsequent application in cultural, social, and psycholinguistic fields. The previous recommends the reader to go through all the chapters of the book for a comprehensive understanding of applied linguistics since the concepts discussed in the chapters are interdependent. The previous also acknowledges that the various questions raised in the book regarding applied linguistics do not have conclusive answers as do those that are raised in psycholinguistics and this is attributed to the complexity that language and human communication present. This preface is therefore important to ground the reader before they can proceed deeper into the book.

Beyond the preface, the three distinct parts of the book demarcate the major contracts of applied linguistics. The first section covers the description of language and its use; the second section covers the major areas of inquiry regarding applied linguistics and the third section discusses the skills and assessment of language. Notably, the third edition of the book is more comprehensive as compared to the two previous editions. Apart from the three categories into

which the book has been divided, there is an introductory chapter and two new chapters that have been added that cover forensic linguistics and multilingualism. Besides, a review of chapters that cover subjects including psycholinguistics, language learning, reading, and assessment repeat that the third edition involves substantial revision by the contributors. The concepts and constructs have been developed and discussed broadly based on credible sources in the subject area. Additionally, the chapters come with practical tasks that the reader can adopt, to internalize the concepts and provide a reference list at the end of each chapter to encourage further leadership on each subject covered.

The first section of the book covers the description of language and its use. This section is divided into five distinct chapters: the first chapter, written by Diane Larsen-Freeman and Jeanette DeCarrico, examines the meaning of grammar and the description of grammatical rules. In the second chapter, the authors also discuss the modalities involved in the learning and teaching of grammar and salient differences between written and spoken grammar. This chapter also explores various limitations with regard to the grammatical description and also various pedagogical issues associated with teaching and learning grammar.

The third chapter is written by Paul Nation and Paul Meara and focuses on the subject of vocabulary. The chapter looks at the essence of vocabulary in language and examines the multi-dimensional features of vocabulary. They further delve into the vocabularies that people should learn as they learn a particular language and how they should go about it. They, therefore, provide strategies that could be used to achieve this which include intentional or deliberate vocabulary learning, lexical inferencing, dictionary use, and incidental vocabulary learning. Furthermore, the chapter also discusses the process of assessing vocabulary and the challenges involved in the assessment of the scope of vocabulary for various learners.

The fourth chapter written by Michael McCarthy, Diana Slade, and Christian Matthiessen tackles the subject of discourse analysis of language. They comprehensively define discourse analysis with all its concepts; they then examine the intertwined factors involved in the analysis of both written and spoken discourse. These issues include the continuum that ranges between written and spoken discourse. It also involves the disparities between informal and formal spoken discourses. The chapter essentially simplifies the understanding of discourse analysis for the reader and more particularly summarizes the pedagogical implications that arise from discourse analysis processes.

The fifth chapter by Vladimir Žegarac and Helen Spencer-Oatey covers the subject of pragmatics in language. The chapter, therefore, focuses on the methods and paradigms used in conducting language pragmatics research. The reading of this chapter explicitly clarifies the role of pragmatics in language teaching and learning, which is an area that has received limited attention in

linguistic studies. The chapter, therefore, provides seminal ideas that could be used in conducting language pragmatics studies.

The sixth chapter of the book focuses on corpus linguistics. This chapter was written by Randi Reppen and Rita Simpson-Vlach who provide a clear understanding of what corpus linguistics entails and the various types of corpora available to linguists. The authors explicitly differentiate between the perceived knowledge gaps regarding the functions and importance of corpus linguistics and more particularly with regard to teaching and learning language. The authors also suggest invaluable pedagogical insights on how corpus linguistics can be applied in the classroom context. These insights are both invaluable to language learners and language instructors.

The second section of this book looks at the major areas of enquiry related to applied linguistics. This section is made up of six chapters, covering a broad scope of subjects related to enquiry in applied linguistics. This includes a chapter by Spada and Lightbown on second language acquisition; and another by Mech, Tabori, Kroll, and de Bot on psycholinguistics. The next chapters are based on social linguistics by Llamas and Stockwell; discuss language learners' learning style, language learning strategy, and motivation by Cohen and Henry; forensic linguistics by Tkacukova; and multilingualism by Taylor. Notably, the chapter by Cohen and Henry is arguably one of the most elaborate in this section as it provides complete enthusiastic story narrations of learning styles. It also provides explicit motivations and strategies for this particular learning style. It is also worth noting that the last two chapters in this section are a new edition of the book. This is important considering that the chapter on forensic linguistics responds to the recent concerns and attention given to the subjects which are considered fast-growing sub-areas of applied linguistics. In particular, Tkacukova uses this chapter to define forensic linguistics and also discuss the breadth of its scope. She also discusses the pertinent issues associating forensic linguistics with applied linguistics such as courtroom discourses and legal communication. She thereafter concludes the chapter by examining the various pedagogical implications related to the teaching and learning of forensic linguistics.

The third and final section of the book focuses on language skills, which is expected of books that are published on this particular subject. The section is made up of four chapters that cover language skills subjects including listening written by Lynch and Mendelsohn; speaking by Burns and Seidlhofer; reading by Jiang, Grabe, and Carrell; and writing and assessment by Matsuda and Silva. One of the most intriguing chapters in this section is that on listening, which discusses the models and theories of listening such as the information processing theory, communication model, situated action model, and the social/contextual theory. The chapter provides insights on how listening as a language learning skill can be enhanced in the process of language acquisition

and further development of language competencies. In the chapter on speaking, Burns and Seidlhofer look at genres of speaking and the issues related to pronunciations. The chapter on reading by Jiang, Grabe, and Carrell discusses the various starting or rather entry points in the learning and teaching of both first and second language. The chapter is therefore instructive in helping understand ways of overcoming the difficulties involved in the earliest stages of teaching and learning both first and second language. Besides, the chapter on writing and assessment by Matsuda and Silva examines the various tasks and strategies that both learners and language instructors can use in learning and testing language competencies. The chapter demonstrates the significance of assessing language development, which is essential in identifying challenges that learners may be facing and helping them to overcome so that they can develop their language skills and competencies.

In conclusion, this book provides a comprehensive understanding of applied linguistics considering the breadth of the contributions that include insights from experienced and distinguished researchers in the subject area. The book is an invaluable resource for curriculum developers in applied linguistics and is a must-read for students, language instructors, practitioners, and researchers who are keen on broadening their knowledge base and skills with regard to the subject of applied linguistics. There is, however, room for improvement in subsequent editions which could cover subjects such as the heritage of language education, and language education assessment which is essential applied linguistic components that are absent in the current edition. The edition may also contain any other emergent topics that may be associated with technology use in the learning and teaching of language. It is also recommended for readers of the book to consider reading it along with the journal article paper written by Swan (2018), which also covers the subject of applied linguistics albeit from the perspective of consumers. Future editions of the book would be enriched with the inclusion of this particular paper, which would then make it a complete and authoritative reference material for the subject of applied linguistics

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