BOOK REVIEWS

○ **L. MULLANY AND P. STOCKWELL (EDS.),**
INTRODUCING ENGLISH LANGUAGE:
A RESOURCE BOOK FOR STUDENTS
(OXON, ROUTLEDGE. 2010. PP. XIII. 303)

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This new book in the Routledge English Language Introductions (RELI) series makes a valuable contribution to the field by fulfilling the promise of the title; it is a resource book for those who are new to linguistics. The book explores basic concepts, reviews key and secondary readings, and includes interesting exercises in a systematic and structured fashion.

The book employs the standard RELI structure to present the material in four sections: A (Introduction), B (Development), C (Exploration), and D (Extension). Section A provides the reader with a good overview of the material covered in the whole book. The authors systematically cover key concepts within linguistics and applied linguistics as well as key areas in language study in thirteen numbered units: phonetics and phonology, morphology and lexicology, semantics and pragmatics, grammatical parts, text and discourse, early childhood acquisition, psycholinguistics, history of English, sociolinguistics, World Englishes, stylistics, methodological paradigms, and language theories. The authors provide clear definitions of linguistic concepts in very accessible language.

In parallel with the concepts introduced in Section A, Section B offers comprehensive coverage of key aspects of English. In the areas of phonology and phonetics, for instance, consonants and vowels are thoroughly described and discussed, with useful tables complementing the material. Key concepts in these fields are defined using technical terms but in ways that make their meanings clear to the novice. Distinctions between technical terms and concepts such as polysemy versus plesionymy, negative face versus positive face, single floor versus collaborative floor, topic drift versus topic shift, etc. are clearly explained. In addition, classic readings such as Brown and Levinson's (1987) *Politeness: Some Universals in Language Usage* and Leech's (1983) *Principles of Pragmatics*, as well as readings from researchers such as Lakoff and Grice are reviewed in this chapter. Section B, as its title ('Development') suggests, deepens and develops the general overview gained in the first section. This section gives the reader a more detailed knowledge of concepts relating to the English language.

Section C is in effect the continuation of sections A and B. However, it explores the key concepts introduced in sections A and B from an applied perspective. Topics like performing accents, syntactic effects, learning to read, exploring the mind, doing politeness, texts in action, theory into practice, and collecting data attract the reader's attention. Unlike the two preceding chapters which do not include activities for the learner, this chapter contains very interesting exercises and thought-provoking activities. The activities mostly take the form of discussion questions which are posed immediately after a text. These activities encourage learners to reflect further on the materials presented in order to assist their understanding. There are also some tasks to be undertaken in the real world, such as asking learners to collect advertising language in their local region. By including different types of activities, the authors are likely to spark the interests of a range of readers in the field of linguistics and applied linguistics. This is one of the features of the book which makes it a good potential university textbook since it gives students the opportunity to come to grips with the materials presented in practice rather than just in theory. Overall, then, the material in this section encourages readers to try out their own ideas, using their newly acquired knowledge.

Section D adds even more wealth to this publication. In parallel with the topics in the preceding chapters, the authors introduce the work of linguists well-known for their research in the field, such as the phonological studies of Collins and Mees, Sinclair's research on units of meaning, the work of Cutting on speech acts, Cheshire on conversation analysis, Cook on advertising, Ochs and Schieffelin on socialization and grammatical development, Kirkpatrick on World Englishes, and Dörnyei on research methods, to name but a few. The authors introduced in this section employ different research paradigms and methods in a wide variety of contexts, ranging from research by Simpson on transitivity to that of Carter and Sealey which describes doing research on real language, reviewing discussions germane to the classic theories of Saussure and Chomsky and more recent theories of language as human practice and 'cultural emergent property'. This section introduces the reader to research which is being undertaken at the forefront of the field. In addition, it serves as a stepping stone for students interested in different fields of research. Section D is likely to engage and inspire new students of linguistics and applied linguistics, and it is enriched by a 'further reading' section at the end of the chapter.

Overall, this foundational book has a great deal to offer undergraduate students in the fields of linguistics and applied linguistics. It provides an excellent option as an introductory textbook. The innovative and flexible structure of the book makes it possible for the reader to read in two different ways, either to work across these sections and build gradually on their knowledge of particular areas or alternatively read straight through from beginning to the end to get an overview of the whole field. Taking the first path, the reader could start with a topic

and continue it across the numbered units. This way of reading takes the reader rapidly from a key concept in Section A to a level of expertise in Section D. The second way of reading, however, would enable the reader to establish a broad sense of the key concepts in the field, deepen their knowledge, and later on test out this knowledge. This structure of the book also allows students to use it both as a textbook and a reference book.

Another attractive feature of the book is the use of engaging, carefully-crafted, and lively texts including a wide range of authentic data and images such as political conversations between internationally-known politicians, poems, signs, etc. This feature of the book will assist new students in establishing a sound understanding of the relationship between abstract concepts and the real world. The texts are also accompanied by companion websites which support the material. These websites provide the learner with additional activities, project ideas for each unit, and suggestions for further reading. With all these features, this book is likely to have great appeal for learners setting off on their journey in the field of linguistics.