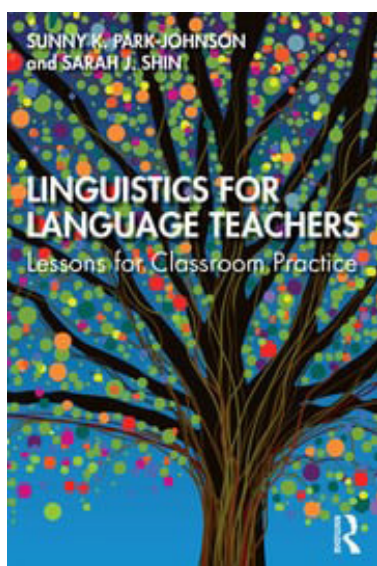


BOOK REVIEW



Title:	Linguistics for Language Teachers: Lessons for Classroom Practices
Authors:	Sunny K. Park-Johnson and Sarah J. Shin
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Reviewers:	Montarat Rungruangthum, <i>Rajamangala University of Technology Phra Nakhon, Thailand & Thidaporn Jumpakate, Suranaree University of Technology, Thailand</i>

“Linguistics for Language Teachers: Lessons for Classroom Practices” written by Sunny K. Park-Johnson and Sarah J. Shin provides an overview of linguistic knowledge for language teachers, describes linguistic components from word to real-world use levels, and shades light on teaching implications and how well-equipped language teachers can promote language learning in each chapter. This book gradually introduces us to the multiple layers of language, including fundamental language components such as phonetics, phonology, morphology, syntax, semantics and pragmatics, language use in social contexts, language change, historical English, language policy, and writing systems.

Unlike other linguistic textbooks, this book heightens our interests as the content is easy to follow. The introduction, body and conclusion are portrayed respectively, providing comprehensible examples in English and other languages, detailed diagrams (e.g., articulators), online resources and language analysis websites, up-to-date references, and trending issues in language teaching. Therefore, it does not only offer a broad understanding of linguistics itself, but also illustrates fundamental language analysis practices for novice researchers who are interested in linguistics and English or foreign language research. This book comprises eleven chapters which can be summarized as follows:

Chapter 1 introduces a brief overview of the essential language components, from phonetics to pragmatics, and highlights reasons why language teachers should have prior linguistic knowledge, as it would enable them to understand language systematically, develop their professions as well as help students better accomplish their language learning. By delving just deep enough into these core components of English linguistics, the authors were able to successfully raise not only readers’ curiosity, but also their language awareness.

Chapters 2 and 3 then review the differences between phonetics (e.g., how consonants and vowels sounds are produced) and phonology (e.g., which sounds form a meaningful utterance).

The authors illustrate through useful diagrams (i.e., articulators, tongue positions, and the International Phonetic Alphabet (IPA) chart) and linking ideas to the English pronunciation, how language teachers can ultimately help students improve their pronunciation of target languages.

Chapter 4 concerns morphology or word level and word formation. The authors introduce vocabulary size and then lead us to technical terms such as roots and affixes (e.g., prefixes, suffixes, and infixes). The morpheme classifications and word combinations (e.g., compound words) from English and other foreign languages are then given step-by-step explanations, which are thoroughly easy to understand. Our favorite part is the recommended websites where students can research new English words by themselves and take part in various word-learning activities.

Chapter 5 involves syntax or the analysis of sentences, describing parts of speech and how words are formed into sentences, and the importance of grammatical rules. The authors show the syntactic tree diagrams of phrases and clauses of English, and differentiate movement in the active and passive voices. Overall, this chapter suggests that language teachers should shift students' focus to the specific grammatical form, use various structures of the same word, as well as encourage students to generate grammatical differences, for example, forming different *wh*-questions for real-world use.

Chapter 6 connects semantics and pragmatics, clarifying how meaning is derived from grammatical rules (e.g., the relationship between a word and its meaning; the importance of semantic roles), before linking it to how meaning can also be interpreted from non-grammatical rules (e.g., speakers' attitudes and social context). What we have found interesting is how the authors draw our attention to conversational communication by talking about Grice's four maxims and speech acts. In addition to pedagogical implications, this chapter also supports language learning through culture and real-world use.

Chapter 7 talks about sociolinguistics or language in society, what results in language variation and dialects, how language links to one's identity, and how the use of language may lead to discrimination. The authors raise our concerns as language teachers of the importance in understanding that students may speak differently. Thus, it strikes us as a reminder that language teachers ought to take standard and non-standard varieties into consideration when teaching English and other foreign languages.

Chapter 8 presents languages in contact, describing a phenomenon where languages or varieties meet, usually due to movements (e.g., migration), thus resulting in the change of a language itself; for instance, the borrowing of words or structures into another language, the construction of pidgins and creoles, and the evolution of English as global language. By helping students recognize the diversity of English, particularly in this chapter, language teachers can also impart on them a sense of appreciation for these Englishes instead of widely dismissing them as minority languages.

Chapter 9 takes us through the history of English throughout eras: Pre-History, Old English, Middle English and Modern English. Here, the authors provide clear examples on how language formations have changed over time, such as vowel shifts and the influence foreign languages hold over English. For English teachers like us, we can point out language change and inconsistencies between spoken and written English language in our language classes. The contents of this chapter may well help students in understanding why vowel pronunciations in English are inconsistent, especially with words that are influenced by French, Latin or German.

Chapter 10 clarifies common misconceptions of bilingualism where educators tended to perceive the phenomenon as rare because bilinguals were often thought to require perfectly balanced proficiency in two languages. However, it also reveals how bilingualism might limit child intelligence due to the lack of proficiency in both languages. This chapter is outstanding as it clearly guides language teachers on how to teach learners to reach their bilingual communicative goals through the help of a case study.

Chapter 11, serves as a conclusion, and identifies what difficulties students might encounter when learning the written components of the target language. The following types of writings are introduced: logographic (e.g., cuneiform, hieroglyphs, Chinese characters) and phonographic (e.g., syllabic writing, alphabetic writing). Though a few case studies, the authors show how these writing systems were taught to students. This segment is particularly helpful to language teachers as it illustrates for us, how to introduce and explain the differences between spoken and written languages for students before leading them through any writing task or assignment.

To sum up, this fascinating book fills the gap of linguistic knowledge for language teachers and teacher trainers. Each chapter is well-planned and well-organized by connecting how teachers as linguists observe language itself and how to help students be proficient in target languages. Although this book highlights trending issues and challenges in language learning and teaching, it solely focuses on linguistic analysis for beginners. In other words, this book is more likely suited to be a preparation guide for novice language teachers or researchers. Our favorite parts include 'voices from the classroom' where language teachers share their teaching tips and exercises that readers can check for their own understanding. This book, overall, is worth reading for any aspiring language teacher, be it English or foreign languages.

THE REVIEWERS

Montarat Rungruangthum, a doctorate in Applied Linguistics from King Mongkut's University of Technology Thonburi (KMUTT), currently works as English teacher at Rajamangala University of Technology Phra Nakhon. Her research interests include education technology, text analysis, English language teaching and social psychology. She received an honorable mention young researcher award in humanities and social sciences by Prachacheun Research Network (PRN) in 2020.

montarat.ru@rmutp.ac.th



Thidaporn Jumpakate is an English lecturer at Suranaree University of Technology, Thailand. She received her M.A. in Applied Linguistics for English Language Teaching from King Mongkut's University of Technology Thonburi, Thailand. Her research interests include internationalization, English language teaching and intercultural communication. thidaporn.j@sut.ac.th

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