

FOR THE LOVE OF LANGUAGE

AN INTRODUCTION TO LINGUISTICS

Language is essential to human life, both as a basic social necessity and also as a powerful and complex social resource. *For the Love of Language: An introduction to linguistics* offers a comprehensive introduction to the workings of language and the role of linguistics in investigating its fundamental design.

Kate Burridge and Tonya Stebbins' thorough and engaging investigation into language and linguistics covers topics such as:

- strategies for learning about how language works
- the use of linguistics to address real-world problems
- the structure and meaning of words
- the systems that organise language
- changes to language over time
- how language is used in written and spoken communication
- the links between language, the mind and the world.

Written by authors with extensive academic experience in the field of linguistics and including examples from Australia, New Zealand and around the world to engage the reader, *For the Love of Language* is a lively and comprehensive resource for undergraduate students in foundation linguistics.

Extensive additional resources, including a list of key words and essential concepts, quizzes, additional exercises and research projects, can be found on the book's companion website at www.cambridge.edu.au/academic/linguistics.

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KATE BURRIDGE
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SYMBOLS USED IN THIS BOOK

Although linguistics relies heavily on abbreviations in a number of areas, we have tried to spell out most terms in this book. Where abbreviations are used, they are always introduced first in spelt out form. If the reader does come across an abbreviation that is not clear, the Leipzig Glossing Rules includes a list of standard abbreviations (beginning on page 8) that provides a useful reference point (see <https://www.eva.mpg.de/lingua/pdf/LGR08.02.05.pdf>).

The reader may also find it useful to refer to the materials on the inside cover of the book that set out the International Phonetic Alphabet (IPA) and provide references for phonemes and parts of speech in English.

Other symbols that we use in the book but do not always define include:

- [] = phonetic representation (in IPA – see Chapters 7 and 8)
- / / = phonemic representation (in IPA – see Chapters 7 and 8)
- < > = orthographic representation (see Chapters 7 and 8)
- > = historical changes (see Chapter 11)
- = processes (see Chapter 8)
- \$ = syllable boundary (see Chapters 7 and 8)
- . = phonological word break within grammatical word
- = affix
- = = clitic
- * = ungrammatical sentence (see Chapter 9); and reconstructed form in a proto language (see Chapter 11)

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PREFACE

After many years of teaching first-year linguistics from a variety of textbooks, piles of notes, selected readings, and so on, we decided to write the textbook we'd always wanted. We had in mind a textbook that:

- covered a full year of content to save on textbook costs for students
- included comprehensive exercises, discussion points, and ideas for research projects to facilitate team teaching and course planning
- showcased the applications of linguistics to real life
- focused on a small number of 'case-study languages' so students could get a deeper sense of language diversity
- was accessible but provided strong foundations for later years.

Each of these choices has had an influence on the book you're now reading – and challenged us to think about new ways to juggle the competing priorities we set ourselves. Here's a brief summary of how the book is set up as a result.

CONTENT

The text is arranged into six parts.

- Part 1, 'Using language to expose language': setting the scene
- Part 2, 'In the beginning was the word': words, word structure, and meaning
- Part 3, 'The deep grooves of language': sounds and grammar
- Part 4, 'Language is a social fact': variation and change
- Part 5, 'Language that rolls up its sleeves': language at work
- Part 6, 'Language is the dress of thought': language, mind and world

We imagine that two or three parts of the text would be enough to fill a 12–13 week semester. As a result, there will be sections of the text that students do not cover in class. These could be set as pre-reading for later courses.

We chose this breadth of content to provide lecturers with flexibility as to what they cover and also to demonstrate to students the relevance of linguistics to so many areas of life. Naturally, if a unit focuses quite deeply on a specific topic, an additional reading or two may be needed.

SUPPORTING MATERIALS

The book is best read and used in conjunction with the supporting materials available on the website. These include additional exercises and research projects as well as more information on the case-study languages and referencing conventions.

CASE-STUDY LANGUAGES

Why have we used case-study languages? And why these particular choices? Our case-study languages are Auslan, English, German, Gurindji (spoken in Australia's Northern Territory), Japanese, Mali (spoken in Papua New Guinea), Māori, Russian and Turung (spoken in Assam, India). Each of these languages is introduced to readers on the website. We wanted to focus on a smaller number of languages than the typical introductory text so that students could gain familiarity with new languages and see how methods and

concepts from linguistics aid this type of learning. We included English as a starting point in many chapters since, in our experience, it can be helpful to start students off with what they already know. It was also important to us to include Auslan, Māori and an Australian Aboriginal language because some awareness of these languages is important in many of the professions in which linguistics students find themselves working later in life. Other people would have made different choices – with around 6000 languages to choose from, there are lots of interesting options!

STYLE AND REFERENCING

In this text we have used the friendly style we associate with popular science writing and tried to write the way we sound when we give lectures. This approach increases accessibility for readers new to linguistics. Consistent with this approach, we have avoided in-text referencing. Obviously this is not the model that students should follow in writing essays. In order to demonstrate the difference, in the online materials we provide guidelines for presenting work, as well as an extract from our book with appropriate academic referencing and supporting discussion.

LINGUISTICS MATTERS

In this book we seek to expose the wondrous workings of language – well, as best we can in 18 short chapters. At the same time, we want to highlight many of the ways in which people’s lives are affected by language – and we trust it will be a comfort for students to know that the things they learn in this book will prove useful. But in particular we want to show what can go wrong when people don’t know enough about language and how it actually works.

Throughout the book we address questions to do with beliefs about class and dialect, bilingualism and language proficiency, correctness and incorrectness, manipulation through advertising and propaganda, the influences of language on thinking and behaviour, linguistic discrimination and the maintenance of power. When a radio talkback caller condemns another for a dropped consonant or an aberrant apostrophe, the comment appears harmless enough. But ‘commonsense’ beliefs people hold about their language often inform decisions that affect the life chances of others, and the consequences can be catastrophic.

Just as we were finishing the writing of this book, sociolinguist Diana Eades told us of a significant legal case, a murder trial, in which the oral evidence and reports of four linguists were central to shaping the judge’s decision to disallow the police interview into evidence. This is because the suspect’s basic level of English was not enough for him to understand his right to silence without an interpreter. Students can read the judgment (*Western Australia v Gibson* [2014] WASC 240) here: <http://www.austlii.edu.au/au/cases/wa/WASC/2014/240.html>. But it is a long and difficult read (Diana Eades’ report alone was 10 000 words!), so Diana has kindly summarised the case for us in a piece that appears on the website – ‘The Relevance of Linguistics to Human Rights in Police Interviews’.

Many of our colleagues, like Diana, have made it their life work to ensure that well-researched principles of linguistics are put above very entrenched but inaccurate notions about how people speak (or should speak). And through their hard work linguistic evidence is now playing a crucial role in dispensing justice in many important areas, such as the law, education and immigration. We wish we could do more in this book to highlight this important work.

ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

Needless to say, a book like this has depended on the generous support of many people. First, we owe a huge debt of gratitude to those colleagues who generously supplied us with material and advice on various case-study languages (Felicity Meakins, Stephen Morey, Adam Schembri, Liz Pearce, Wes Robertson and Marko Pavlyshyn). We are grateful to Mel Burns (whose inspiration became the title of this book) and to Sarah Fishlock, Emma Murphy, Debbie Loakes and Christina Eira, who bravely read draft chapters of the book – their advice and suggestions were invaluable. Special thanks must go to Simon Musgrave for his chapter on computational linguistics and to Jenny Price for her chapter on phonetics – their contributions have been spectacular. There are others we need to thank too – our dear and tolerant friends, colleagues and students who have been so supportive during the time of writing this book, and of course our wonderful families for their endless encouragement and generous patience.

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TEXT

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