

## Reviews

### Comptes rendus

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**Christopher J. Hall, Patrick H. Smith, and Rachel Wicaksono.** 2017. *Mapping Applied Linguistics: A guide for students and practitioners*. 2nd ed. New York: Routledge. Pp. 415. £ 29.99 (soft cover).

Reviewed by Iryna Lenchuk, *Department of English Language and Literature, Dhofar University, Oman*

Writing a textbook on applied linguistics is a challenging task due to the broad range of language-related phenomena discussed in the field, such as language learning, literacy, language planning and policy, language rights, bilingual education, language pathology, language variation, discourse analysis, lexicography and forensic linguistics.

The textbook by Hall et al. (2017) successfully addresses this challenge by inviting the intended reader (e.g., an undergraduate student in applied linguistics or a practitioner of such) to view it as a guide or a map that sketches the diverse terrain of applied linguistics. With the exception of Chapter 1 “Introduction”, the reader can start from any chapter, and the discussion of each topic is supported by further suggested readings and end-of-chapter activities.

Despite the broad range of topics discussed in the book, the reader will not be lost in her journey, as the discussion of language-related problems is shaped by the philosophy adopted by the authors. This philosophy, which makes this textbook stand out among other textbooks on applied linguistics, emphasizes (i) that linguistic diversity encompasses all natural languages and their varieties, including *unstandardized* ones; (ii) the multidisciplinary nature of the field and the fact that it views language as a cognitive as well as a sociocultural phenomenon; (iii) a strong connection between research and the local, bottom-up practices of language users, and (iv) critical approaches to applied linguistics with the objective of making the world a better, more equitable and socially just place.

The discussion of language-related problems starts with Chapter 1, which provides a definition of the term *applied linguistics* and discusses ‘folk’ theories of language. Folk notions of languages cannot be simply ignored, the authors claim, as they

have profound effects on language users. An example of this is “the myth of Monolithic English” (Hall, 2005: 252, Pennycook, 2007: 27), which can be summarized in the following two folk maxims:

- ‘the’ English language is a monolithic social entity, characterized by the ‘standard variety’ spoken by educated native speakers;
- English learners learn, and English teachers teach, ‘the’ English language, analogous to the way ‘proper’ table manners may be learned, taught and prescribed.

The existence of such notions or theories is explained by the lack of general awareness of the dual biological and social nature of language. The three parts of the book (A, B, and C) challenge folk theories by highlighting the most important theoretical and empirical findings in the field.

The objective of Part A “Language in Everyday Use”, which includes chapters on language variation, key populations, discourse analysis, and language policy and planning, is to fight ‘a common sense’ view of language as a monolithic system operated by a set of prescribed rules. By discussing language variation (e.g., accents, dialectal variation, registers, contact varieties, and global Englishes), the authors invite the readers to think about languages as sandy beaches, rain clouds and galaxies, rather than rocks. The discussion of different approaches to discourse analysis includes linguistic (e.g., corpus linguistics) approaches, and social (e.g., critical discourse analysis) approaches. The modern approach to text as a multimodal discourse, where meaning is constructed through everyday objects, sculptures, still or moving images, and sounds, is also examined in Part A. While discussing the literature on language planning and policy, the authors introduce the concept of *critical language planning* as a way to investigate social causes of language policies (e.g., poverty and marginalization) and *translanguaging*, as a way to account for multiple linguistic resources available to multilingual speakers residing in major metropolitan areas. The authors define *translanguaging* as “multilingualism from below” (p. 119).

Part B “Language, Learning and Education” includes chapters on literacy, the teaching and learning of additional languages, and bi- and multilingual education. In their discussion of literacy and educational practices, the authors criticize the *deficit model* of education, which is used to describe the gap between the multiple linguistic resources available to the learners and the linguistic resources (i.e., a standard variety of language) that are enforced in education. The authors call for the inclusion of different languages, varieties and literacy practices (including digital and multimodal) for the purpose of *expanding* rather than *limiting* the linguistic resources of the learners. Part B also provides an in-depth description of bi- and multilingual programs that concludes with a discussion of the concepts of *modality*, *mobility* and *mixing* that are changing the current approaches to the study of bi- and multilingual education. The authors limit the discussion on teaching and learning of additional languages to the following areas: (i) context of additional language learning (e.g., foreign vs. second language learning), (ii) methods that fit specific contexts, (iii) individual differences of learners (e.g., age, aptitude, motivation, learning strategies), and (iv) assessment.

Part C “Language and Specialized Uses” includes chapters on translation, lexicography, forensic linguistics and language pathology. According to the authors, the main objective of translation is to make the content of a source language (SL) text comprehensible, rather than to be true to its form. Equivalency between a SL text and a target language (TL) is examined in relation to the grammatical, lexical, pragmatic and cultural levels of language, and the authors conclude that it is impossible to find *absolute equivalence* between SL and TL texts. They also discuss how it is impossible to substitute machine translation for human translation due to the novel and unpredictable nature of language output. Turning to lexicography, the authors emphasize the importance of keeping the end user in mind when examining word usage. Different types of dictionaries, as well as the role of technology in the collection, selection, construction and arrangement of dictionaries are also presented in Part B. The discussion of forensic linguistics includes a description of legal proceedings, where language is used as the medium of the law (e.g., analysis of a sample of language elicited from a refugee claimant in order to prove their nationality) and as the subject of the law (i.e., in cases of plagiarism of written texts). The discussion of issues related to language pathology includes a short description of the neural representation of language, as well as different types of language pathology (e.g., aphasia and dyslexia). Keeping the issues of social justice in mind, the authors emphasize the role of applied linguists as advocates for the rights of minority language users (including speakers of unstandardized language varieties), and marginalized populations (e.g., asylum seekers, refugees and people with disabilities).

The concluding Chapter 14 discusses “the hottest topics of today’s and tomorrow’s applied linguistics” by highlighting the voices of five practitioners working in the field. The key issues examined include (i) technological innovations in the fields of translation, literacy, additional language learning and language pathology, and (ii) the dissolution of geographical, linguistic, disciplinary and professional borders. The chapter further discusses professional standards, ways of doing applied linguistics that incorporate local, bottom-up practices, and the role applied linguists can play in promoting social justice and equality.

Overall, the authors successfully manage to discuss a broad range of questions raised by applied linguists in the second decade of the 21<sup>st</sup> century. The discussion presented in the textbook reflects the authors’ passion for the field and the roles of applied linguists as agents of social change, which makes it a very engaging read. A selection of internet resources on the companion website is an excellent way to reach a population of readers who show a preference for digital and multimodal texts.

Within an overall successful presentation of the material related to the field of applied linguistics, Chapter 9, on additional language education, seems to be the least successful chapter of the book. This is very unfortunate, considering the fact that (i) this is the most researched area in applied linguistics, as acknowledged by the authors, and (ii) this is the reason why many people undergo training in applied linguistics. It is surprising that in the chapter on teaching and learning of additional languages, there is no mention of communicative language teaching (CLT), a method that is widely used in language learning programs throughout the world. It should be noted that like any method, CLT has its advantages and disadvantages.

However, its major advantage is in recognizing the goal of additional language learning as the *ability* to use an additional language in a variety of contexts, rather than the acquisition of native speaker competence. This goal is emphasized in many learning contexts, for example in federally and provincially funded language programs for refugees and immigrants in Canada (Centre for Canadian Language Benchmarks (CCLB) 2012). There is plenty of evidence (both theoretical and practical) to suggest that the goal of many language programs and many learners around the world is the acquisition of communicative competence, rather than native speaker competence (CCLB 2013: 15–19). This particular goal makes the authors' critique of *native-speakerism* presented in Chapter 9, outdated. Moreover, it does not reflect the local, bottom-up practices, whose inclusion in the field is advocated by the authors.

When creating a map of the terrain which is as broad and diverse as the terrain of applied linguistics itself, it is challenging to decide which landmarks should be present on the map, and to remain neutral and objective. Notwithstanding the wrinkle discussed above, the map that the authors create in this book constitutes an excellent guide to the exciting field of applied linguistics.

#### REFERENCES

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**Friederici, Angela D.** 2017. *Language in our brain. The origins of a uniquely human capacity*. Cambridge, MA: The MIT Press. Pp. 304. US \$45 (hardcover).

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*Language in our brain* presents an in-depth exploration of the neural substrates linked to the language network, according to the current literature. The development, evolution and ontology of the language circuit are also considered, with a particular focus on the syntactic underpinnings of language.

In Part I, the author explores the neurological substrates associated with the numerous stages of language processing, which are necessary for any given communication event.

In Chapter 1, “Language Functions in the Brain: From Auditory Input to Sentence Comprehension”, the author proposes a model for language comprehension at the auditory level. The model is supported by a review of crucial literature with