Doing English Language: A Guide for Students, By Angela Goddard

Kamal Heidari Sureshjani[1]

1) Shiraz University, Iran

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Review I

The first chapter of the volume provides its readers with a brief account of how the study of language started. It says that the study of English language is not that old. It started around the nineteenth century and developed increasingly in the twentieth century. Before English was considered as a subject to study, classic languages (Rome & Greek) were in the market. However, in the 19th century some researchers and experts of English language called for going beyond the classic languages and focusing on English language to be studied. The study of English first was limited to its literature and literary works but with the outset of the 20th century, it was argued that language and language use is more than just literature. Therefore, its different aspects and skills need to be focused on and studied.

Having briefly stated some points on the history of studying English language, the author in the second chapter narrows down his concentration on English language to linguistic and points out that among different researchers who had worked on linguistics of English language, Sausser has had a remarkably knocked-on effect. In other words, he was the first expert who studied the linguistic aspects of language in a rather systematic way by coining concepts such as langue, parole, synchronic, and diachronic. The author, at the end of the chapter, also goes over the trend of development of language and linguistics in the U.S saying that the early works in this term in the U.S had don by anthropologists (like Sapir & Whorf) and then gradually their focus shifted to psychology especially with the arrival of Chomsky to linguistics.

The third chapter touches on the benchmarks marked out by the U.K Higher Education Agency and other related organizations in the area of education. The author then tries to highlight the importance of having such benchmarks in education by stating that different groups including teachers, students, curriculum developers, etc. may benefit from them. The chapter finally ends with some further points on the significance of English language and its study (points like English language is highly applied, the main subject of study is English while taking a look at other areas too, the study of English language and its courses are interested in both how language is used and also how it shapes people's thinking, etc.).

Chapter four of the book enters the area of linguistics in detail. To put it another way, having discussed over the history and origin of studying English language, Angela Goddard, as the author, now in this chapter deals with different aspects of English linguistics. To do so, she divides linguistics into two main sub-areas of socio linguistics and psycholinguistics. Then, she elaborates on their pertaining concepts like variation (how different people use language differently), interactional linguistics (how people interact through language to achieve intersubjectivity), identity construction (referring to this point that it is language that creates our identity not vice versa), etc. and in the domain of psycholinguistics, she illuminates about topics such as language & though interrelationship, language & cognition (how language is processed in mind), language & iconicity (the relationship between the ordering and organization of linguistic elements), language and meaning (how language assists the meaning-making process), etc.

This chapter tries to find a relationship between the media and literature concepts and linguistics. In other words, the author attempts to make her readers aware of the point that it is possible to analyze language through concepts and ideas that are primarily related to media and literature. To do so, she focuses on three concepts of text, discourse, and discourses. In the elaboration of "text", she explicates that text generally refers to any literary, written work. However, what the concept of text implies is the whole unity, the inter-connectness, or in a more linguistically-oriented term, cohesion. Furthermore, regarding the term, "discourse", she argues that while discourse analysis may refer to the small scale analysis of spoken interaction, it can also have a larger meaning that is, of ways of

constructing stories about the whole globe and communicating those stories in speech and writing. Finally, as with the term "discourses", the chapter says that meaning is not something necessarily about the ideas that they commonly express through their culture, social, political identities.

Chapter six deals with creative writing as an academic subject and its role in better understanding of English language. The author here alludes that creative writing doesn't just mean to write well. Rather, it also refers to this point that through creative writing and pertaining activities it is possible to increase our critical awareness on language. That is, we should make a distinction between creativity and criticality by saying that creativity leads to criticality. Then the author provides a concrete example that is, "textual intervention", in which we use different strategies like changing the time and place of a story, having another character for telling the story, etc. to generate new insights of the text under studied. The chapter finally goes over the concept of "genre" and after mentioning some preliminaries on it tries to highlight its role in better understanding of language by giving examples about signs seen in the streets.

In the seventh chapter the term "meta language" is dealt with. It says that we need to have some explicit knowledge about assorted aspects of language in order to be able to use it in a more telling way. In other words, as yet, the author in the former chapters has dealt with language from a macro-level perspective by discussing over concepts like literariness, media, sociolinguistics, etc. But in the current chapter she takes a micro-level perspective to conclude that consciousness- raising is a must to not only better understanding of language but more effective use of it. The chapter finally maneuvers over concepts like phonology, lemma, prosody, etc.

Chapter eight first delineates the term "interdisciplinary" as the inter-connectness among different subject areas and then states that individuals' understanding of language can be practically applied in various real contexts. In other words, the author in this chapter provide different authentic contexts in which all theoretical understandings and analyses of language can be really exerted. The author specifically exemplifies this point in contexts of education, business, policy, computer, and media. As an example, in the context of media, she completely illuminates how language

can be used in advertisement to make people convinced to buy a specific item.

The author up to this chapter elaborated mainly on the interrelationship of different areas like media, literature, sociology, etc. and language understanding. Now, in this chapter she takes a further step by accounting for how we can reach an acceptable level of linguistics. To put it clearly, the author writes about how to undertake research in language through which we can boost our comprehension regarding language. She first talks about the interdisciplinary nature of language and considers it a merit for those working on language. Then, she defines research pertinent concepts including data, research design, hypothesis, research question, literature review, etc.

This penultimate chapter functions as a report about the rate of employment for those majoring in English-related fields. Chapter eleven, as the last chapter, addresses how to create an effective resume to increase the chance to be employed. The chapter argues that different aspects like communication abilities, intercultural skills, presentation skills, subject-specific qualifications, etc. need to be included in an efficient CV.

Critical View on the Book

Having reviewed the main ideas and concepts mentioned through the volume chapters, now the merits and demerits of the book can be more exactly discussed. As with the strong points, first and foremost, the book can be a great treasury for students who have just started studying English language technically. In other words, these novice students can from the beginning of their knowledge development get a clear and at the same time comprehensive picture of the history of the language, its different aspects, and also the ways they can reach a better understanding of the language. Moreover, in explanation of different terms mentioned in the volume chapters, the author uses tangible, concrete examples so that getting the intended point may be maximized.

Despite the numerous strengths that can be assigned to the volume, it is not without weak points. As an example, the nature of some of the chapters are very short and the main theme of those chapters are not exemplified completely (especially chapters 2, 3). Besides, as the author herself admits

in the beginning pages of the volume, the book is limited mostly to U.K concepts and although no culture operates in isolation, the points brought in it need to be approached cautiously to be applied in other contexts.

Kamal Heidari Soureshjani, Shiraz University
K86tefl@yahoo.com