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Nota di contenuto	Machine generated contents note: Dedication Acknowledgements Preface Chapter 1: Introduction Language, languages, and the people who speak them What is language? Language differences Language similarities Variation through time Variation today Understanding the world of language The complex nature of language Judging language Standard Englishes and vernacular Englishes Grammars Meaning Standard Englishes and different world views Structure A tour of language Chapter summary Key concepts Further reading Exercises Chapter 2: Learning about what you already know Letters and phonetic symbols: A mismatch Phonetic symbols: A convenient lie Meaning, ambiguity, and arbitrariness A sketch of sounds Consonants and vowels Consonants Vowels Are all language sounds important to all languages? Making a difference: Contrasting sounds with minimal pairs Playing with voicing Variation through time: How many sounds did English start with? The Story of R (Part 1) Chapter summary Key Concepts Further reading Exercises Chapter 3: Predictable differences Meanings with minimal pairs Some sound patterns are associated with social meaning Structure Sound patterns Schwa rule Deletion and insertion Assimilation The Story of R (part II) Englishes and other

languages Variation through time Variation today Chapter summary Key concepts Exercises Chapter 4: Lexical ambiguity and arbitrariness Our mental dictionaries: Unlike paper dictionaries in several ways The lexicon and synonyms Structure How to identify lexical categories Content Lexical Categories Adjectives Nouns Verbs Function words: The mortar for the bricks Coordinators Determinatives Pronouns Prepositions Chapter summary Key concepts Further reading Exercises Chapter 5: Meanings change Lexical semantic change and the arbitrariness of language How to create new words Nonce words Idioms Jargon Slang Chapter summary Key concepts Further reading Exercises Chapter 6: Putting parts together Morphemes Affixes Content and function morphemes Suffixal homophony Word trees Morphemes and other systems Variation through time: A shift from more synthetic to more analytic Variation today Chapter summary Key concepts Further reading Exercises Chapter 7: Meaning and ambiguity Structure and hierarchy Ambiguity and constituency Englishes and other languages Variation through time Variation today Chapter summary Key concepts Further reading Exercises Chapter 8: Meaning and ambiguity: Part 1 Verb Phrases and traditional parts The motivation for Inflectional Phrases (IPs) The structure of Inflectional Phrases Building Inflectional Phrases Meaning and ambiguity: Part 2 Constituency in a different kind of phrase English and other languages Variation today: Chapter summary Key concepts Further reading Exercises Chapter 9: Meaning and ambiguity Another realm of language structure Structure and constraints Structure of intent and effect The structure of implicature Direct and indirect: Getting the job done A special kind of verb: Performative speech acts with performative verbs Discourse markers Discourse scripts Politeness Communicative competence Variation in conversation Chapter summary Key concepts Further reading Exercises Chapter 10: Language in education Correct English Prescriptive approaches to language Prescriptive peeves Descriptive approaches to language Chapter summary Key concepts Further reading Exercises Chapter 11: Language acquisition Synchronic variation Diachronic variation World Englishes Communication with so many Englishes Chapter summary Key concepts Further reading Exercises Glossary References Index .

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## Sommario/riassunto

"An Introduction to Language helps shape readers' understanding of what language is, how it works, and why it is both elegantly complex and yet essential to who we are"--

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